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# TEA AND TEA DRINKING


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by  
Arthur Reade

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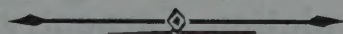
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# TEA AND TEA DRINKING.



BY

ARTHUR READE,

AUTHOR OF "STUDY AND STIMULANTS."

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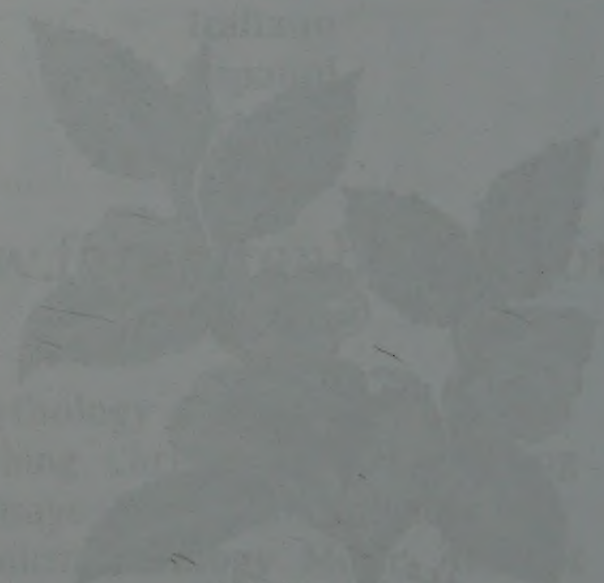
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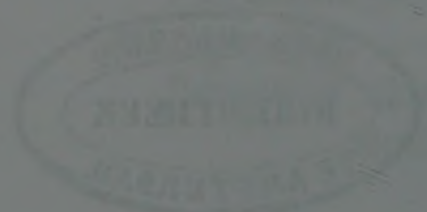




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# PREFACE.



THE question of the influence of tea, as well as that of alcohol and tobacco, has occupied the attention of the author for some time. Apart from its physiological aspect, the subject of tea-drinking is extremely interesting; and in the following pages an attempt has been made to describe its introduction into England, to review the evidence of its friends and foes, and to discuss its influence on mind and health. An account is also given of the origin of tea-meetings, and of the methods of making tea in various countries. Although the book does not claim to be a complete history of tea, yet a very wide range of authors has been consulted to furnish the numerous details which illustrate the usages, the benefits, and the evils (real or imaginary) which surround the habit of tea-drinking.

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# TEA AND TEA-DRINKING.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION OF TEA.

Introduced by the East India Company—Mrs. Pepys making her first cup of tea—Virtues of tea—Thomas Garway's advertisement—Waller's birthday ode—Tea a rarity in country homes—Introduced into the Quaker School—Extension of tea-drinking—The social tea-table a national delight—England the largest consumer of tea.

“I SENT for a cup of tee—a China drink—of which I had never drank before,” writes Pepys in his diary of the 25th of September, 1660. It appears, however, that it came into England in 1610; but at ten guineas a pound it could scarcely be expected to make headway. A rather large consignment was, however, received in 1657; this fell into the hands of a thriving London merchant, Mr.

Thomas Garway, who established a house for selling the prepared beverage. Another writer states that tea was introduced by the East India Company early in 1571. Though it may not be possible to fix the exact date, one fact is clear, that it was a costly beverage. Not until 1667 did it find its way into Pepys' own house. "Home," he says, "and there find my wife making of tea, a drink which Mr. Pelling, the potticary, tells her is good for her cold and defluxions." Commenting upon this entry, Charles Knight said, "Mrs. Pepys making her first cup of tea is a subject to be painted. How carefully she metes out the grains of the precious drug which Mr. Pelling, the potticary, has sold her at an enormous price—a crown an ounce at the very least; she has tasted the liquor once before, but then there was sugar in the infusion—a beverage only for the highest. If tea should become fashionable, it will cost in their housekeeping as much as their claret. However, Pepys says the price is coming down, and he produces the handbill of Thomas Garway, in Exchange Alley, which the lady peruses with great satisfaction."

This handbill is an extraordinary production. It is entitled “An exact description of the growth, quality, and virtues of the leaf tea, by Thomas Garway, in Exchange Alley, near the Royal Exchange in London, tobacconist, and seller and retailer of tea and coffee.” It sets forth that—

“Tea is generally brought from China, and groweth there upon little shrubs and bushes. The branches whereof are well garnished with white flowers that are yellow within, of the lightness and fashion of sweet-brier, but in smell unlike, bearing thin green leaves about the bigness of scordium, myrtle, or sumack ; and is judged to be a kind of sumack. This plant hath been reported to grow wild only, but doth not ; for they plant it in the gardens, about four foot distance, and it groweth about four foot high ; and of the seeds they maintain and increase their stock. Of this leaf there are divers sorts (though all one shape) ; some much better than others, the upper leaves excelling the others in fineness, a property almost in all plants ; which leaves they gather every day, and drying them in the shade or in iron pans, over a gentle fire, till the humidity be exhausted, then put close up in leaden pots, preserve them for their drink tea, which is used at meals and upon all visits and entertainments in private families, and in the palaces of grandees ; and it is averred by a padre of Macao, native of Japan, that the best tea ought to be gathered but by virgins, who are destined for this work. The particular virtues are these ; it maketh the body active and lusty ; it helpeth the head ache, giddiness and heaviness thereof ; it removeth the obstructiveness of the

spleen ; it is very good against the stone and gravel, cleaning the kidneys and ureters, being drank with virgin's honey, instead of sugar ; it taketh away the difficulty of breathing, opening obstructions ; it is good against tipitude, distillations, and cleareth the sight ; it removeth lassitude and cleanseth and purifieth acrid humours and a hot liver ; it is good against crudities, strengthening the weakness of the ventricle, or stomach, causing good appetite and digestion, and particularly for men of corpulent body, and such as are great eaters of flesh ; it vanquisheth heavy dreams, easeth the frame and strengtheneth the memory ; it overcometh superfluous sleep, and prevents sleepiness in general, a draught of the infusion being taken ; so that, without trouble, whole nights may be spent in study without hurt to the body, in that it moderately healeth and bindeth the mouth of the stomach."

Other remarkable properties are attributed to the Chinese herb ; but the extracts we have given sufficiently indicate the efforts made to arrest attention and to induce people to buy tea. As a further inducement, this enterprising dealer assures his readers that whereas tea "hath been sold in the leaf for six pounds, and sometimes for ten pounds the poundweight, the said Thomas hath ten to sell from sixteen to fifty shillings in the pound." This clever puff had the desired effect ; for, according to the *Diurnal of Thomas Rugge*, "There were at this time (1659) a



Turkish drink, to be souled almost in every street, called coffee, and another kind of drink called tea ; and also a drink called chocolate, which was a very hearty drink." It was advertised in the public journals. The *Mercurius Politicus*, of the 30th of September, 1658, sets forth : " That excellent, and by all physicians approved, China drink, called by the Chineans Teha, by other nations Tay, alias Tee, is sold at the ' Sultanness Head ' coffee-house, in Sweeting's Rents, by the Royal Exchange, London." It was sold also at " Jonathan's " coffee-house, in Exchange Alley. In her " Bold Strike for a Wife " Mrs. Centlivre laid one of her scenes at " Jonathan's." While the business goes on she makes the coffee boys cry, " Fresh coffee, gentlemen ! fresh coffee ! Bohea tea, gentlemen ! " But the most famous house for tea was Garway's, or, as it appears in " Old and New London," " Garraway's Coffee-house," which was swept away a few years ago in the " march of improvement." For two centuries, however, it had been one of the most celebrated coffee-houses in the city. Defoe mentions it as being frequented about noon by

How Royally

people of quality who had business in the city, and “the more considerable and wealthy citizens;” but it was also the resort of speculators. Here the South Sea Bubblers met, as well as the lovers of good tea. Dean Swift, in his ballad on the South Sea Bubble, calls ‘Change Alley “a narrow sound, though deep as hell;” and describes the wreckers watching for the shipwrecked dead on “Garraway’s Cliffs.”

But the influence of Royalty did more than anything else to make tea-drinking fashionable. “In 1662,” remarks Mr. Montgomery Martin, in a treatise on the ‘Past and Present State of the Tea Trade,’ published in 1832, “Charles II. married the Princess Catherine of Portugal, who, it was said, was fond of tea, having been accustomed to it in her own country, hence it became fashionable in England.” Edmund Waller, in a birthday ode on her Majesty, ascribes the introduction of the herb to the queen, in the following lines:—

“Venus her myrtle, Phœbe has his bays;  
Tea both excels, which she vouchsafes to praise.  
The best of Queens and best of herbes we owe,  
To that bold nation which the way did show

To the fair region, where the sun does rise,  
Whose rich productions we so justly prize.  
The Muse's friend, tea, does our fancy aid,  
Repress those vapours which the head invade,  
And keeps that palace of the soul serene,  
Fit on her birthday to salute the Queen."

Waller is believed to have been the first poet to write in praise of tea, and no doubt his poem did much to promote its use among the rich. In Lord Clarendon's diary, 10th of February, 1688, occurs the following entry:—

"Le Père Couplet supped with me; he is a man of very good conversation. After supper we had tea, which he said was as good as any he had drank in China. The Chinese, who came over with him and Mr. Fraser, supped likewise with us."

In the *Tatler*, of the 10th of October, 1710, appears the following advertisement:—

"Mr. Favy's 16s. Bohea tea, not much inferior in goodness to the best foreign Bohee tea, is sold by himself only at the 'Bell,' in Gracechurch Street. Note.—The best foreign Bohee is worth 30s. a pound; so that what is sold at 20s. or 21s. must either be faulty tea, or mixed with a proportionate quantity of damaged green or Bohee, the

worst of which will remain black after infusion.”

Tea continued a fashionable drink. Dr. Alex. Carlyle, in his “Autobiography,” describing the fashionable mode of living at Harrowgate in 1763, wrote:—“The ladies gave afternoon’s tea and coffee in their turn, which coming but once in four or six weeks amounted to a trifle.” Probably the ladies did not drink so much as their servants, who are reported to have cared more for tea than for ale. In 1755 a visitor from Italy wrote:—“Even the common maid-servants must have their tea twice a day in all the parade of quality; they make it their bargain ‘at first; this very article amounts to as much as the wages of servants in Italy.” This demand was a serious tax upon the purses of the rich; for at that time tea was still excessively dear. According to Read’s *Weekly Journal, or British Gazetteer*, of the 27th of April, 1734, the prices were as follows:—

Green tea	.	.	.	9s. to 12s. per lb.
Congou	.	.	.	10s. „ 12s. „
Bohea	.	.	.	10s. „ 12s. „
Pekoe	.	.	.	14s. „ 16s. „
Imperial	.	.	.	9s. „ 12s. „
Hyson	.	.	.	20s. „ 25s. „



Gradually, however, the prices came down as the consumption increased. In 1740 a grocer, who had a shop at the east corner of Chancery Lane, advertised the finest Caper at 24s. a pound; fine green, 18s.; Hyson, 16s.; and Bohea, 7s. The latter quality was no doubt used in the "Tea-gardens" which at that time had become popular institutions in and around London. The "Mary-le-Bon Gardens" were opened every Sunday evening, when "genteel company were admitted to walk gratis, and were accommodated with coffee, tea, cakes, &c." The quality of the cakes was an important feature at such gardens: "Mr. Trusler's daughter begs leave to inform the nobility and gentry that she intends to make fruit tarts during the fruit season; and hopes to give equal satisfaction as with the rich cakes and almond cheese-cakes. The fruit will always be fresh gathered, having great quantities in the garden; and none but loaf-sugar used, and the finest Epping butter." In one respect the "good old times" were better than these. Gone are the "fruit tarts," the "rich cakes," and the fragrant cup of tea from the suburban "Tea-gardens," which rarely supply refreshment

either for man or beast. At any rate, it is a misnomer to call them "Tea-gardens." We think "Beer-gardens" would more accurately indicate their character. Some day, probably, the landlords of "public-houses" and of "tea-gardens," will endeavour to meet the wants and tastes of all persons. At present they utterly ignore the existence of a large class, not necessarily teetotalers, to whom a cup of tea is more cheering than a glass of grog after a long walk from the city.

Among the most famous tea-houses is Twining's in the Strand. It was founded, Mr. E. Walford says, "about the year 1710, by the great-great-grandfather of the present partners, Mr. Thomas Twining, whose portrait, painted by Hogarth, 'kitcat-size,' hangs in the back parlour of the establishment. The house, or houses—for they really are two, though made one practically by internal communication—stand between the Strand and the east side of Devereux Court. The original dépôt for the sale of the then scarce and fashionable beverage, tea, stood at the south-west angle of the present premises, on

the site of what had been 'Tom's Coffee-house,' directly opposite the 'Grecian.' A peep into the old books of the firm shows that in the reign of Queen Anne tea was sold by the few houses then in the trade at various prices between twenty and thirty shillings per pound, and that ladies of fashion used to flock to Messrs. Twining's house in Devereux Court, in order to sip the enlivening beverage in their small China cups, for which they paid their shillings, much as now-a-days they sit in their carriages eating ices at the door of Gunter's in Berkeley Square on hot days. The bank was gradually engrafted on the old business, after it had been carried on for more than a century from sire to son, and may be said as a separate institution to date from the commercial panic of 1825."

Although tea was extensively used in London and some of the principal cities, it did not become popular in country houses. "For instance, at Whitby," writes the historian of that town, "tea was very little used a century ago, most of the old men being very much against it; but after the death of the old people it soon came into general use."

Old habits die hard. The stronger beverage of English ale had been so long in use that the old folks could not be induced to relinquish it for a foreign herb. A striking instance of the force of habit is related by Dr. Aikin, in his history of Manchester (1795). "About 1720," he says, "there were not above three or four carriages kept in the town. One of these belonged to Madame ——, in Salford. This respectable old lady was of a social disposition, and could not bring herself to conform to the new-fashioned beverage of tea and coffee; whenever, therefore, she made her afternoon's visit, her friends presented her with a tankard of ale and a pipe of tobacco. A little before this period a country gentleman had married the daughter of a citizen of London; she had been used to tea, and in compliment to her it was introduced by some of her neighbours; but the usual afternoon's entertainment at gentlemen's houses at that time was wet and dry sweet-meats, different sorts of cake, and gingerbread, apples, or other fruits of the season, and a variety of home-made wines." At that time it was the custom for the apprentices to

live with their employers, whose fare was far from liberal; but "somewhat before 1760," remarks Dr. Aikin, "a considerable manufacturer allotted a back parlour with a fire for the use of his apprentices, and gave them tea twice a day. His fees, in consequence, rose higher than had before been known, from 250*l.* to 300*l.*, and he had three or four apprentices at a time." Tea was evidently a costly beverage, for "water pottage" appears to have been the usual dish provided for apprentices. Those who could afford it, however, drank the Chinese herb. There are many references to tea in "The Private Journal and Literary Remains of John Byrom," a famous Manchester worthy; and these clearly indicate that in the middle of the eighteenth century tea was very generally provided for visitors. But in some towns the older people were much opposed to tea. The prejudice against it was, however, gradually overcome; the young took kindly to it, and the women, especially, found it an agreeable substitute for alcoholic drinks.

Not until 1860 was tea introduced into the Quaker School at Ackworth, where John



Bright received a portion of his early education. When a boy the great orator was unable to endure the Spartan system of training in force there, and after twelve months' experience he was removed to a private school. For breakfast both boys and girls had porridge poured on bread; for dinner little meat, but plenty of pudding. For a third meal no provision seems to have been made. Mr. Henry Thompson, the historian of the school, thus describes the circumstances under which tea was introduced into the school:—

“In the autumn of 1860, Thomas Pumphrey's health having been in a failing condition for some months, he was requested to take a long holiday for the purpose of recruiting it, if possible. On his return, after a three months' absence, learning that the conduct of the children had been everything that he could desire, he devised for them a treat, which was so effectively managed that we believe it is looked upon by those who had the pleasure of participating in it as one of the most delightful occasions of their school-days. He invited the whole family—boys, girls, and teachers—to an evening tea-party. The only room in the establishment in which he could receive so large a concourse of guests was the meeting-house. In response to his kind proposal, willing helpers flew to his aid. The room where all were wont to meet for worship, and rarely for any other purpose, was by nimble and willing fingers transformed, in a few days, into a festive

hall, whose walls and pillars were draped with evergreen festoons and half concealed by bosky bowers, amidst whose foliage stuffed birds perched and wild animals crouched. Amidst the verdant decorations might also be seen emblazoned the names of great patrons of the school and of the five superintendents who for more than eighty years had guided its internal economy. They who witnessed the scene tell us of two wonderful piles of ornamentation which were erected at the entrances to the minister's gallery—the one symbolic of the activities of the physical, the other of the intellectual, moral, and religious life, as its good superintendent, would have them to be. . . . The village having been requisitioned for cups and saucers for this great multitude, the whole school sat down to a genuine, social, English tea table for the first time in its history."

There can be no doubt that milk is better than tea for the young, but tea now forms part of the dietary at almost every school, and we question whether there is a house in England where tea is unknown. Dr. Edward Smith, writing in 1874, said,—

"No one who has lived for half a century can have failed to note the wonderful extension of tea-drinking habits in England, from the time when tea was a coveted and almost unattainable luxury to the labourer's wife, to its use morning, noon, and night by all classes. The caricature of Hogarth, in which a lady and gentleman approach in a very dainty manner, each holding an oriental tea-cup of infantile size, implies more than a satire upon

the porcelain-purchasing habits of the day, and shows that the use of tea was not only the fashion of a select few, but the quantity of the beverage consumed was as small as the tea-cups."

In another chapter we have given some interesting statistics showing the extent of the consumption of this wonderful beverage, which has exercised such an influence for good in this country.

"A curious and not uninteresting work might be written," Dr. Sigmond said in 1839, "upon the singular benefits which have accrued to this country from the preference we have given to the beverage obtained from the tea-plant; above all, those that might be derived from the rich treasures of the vegetable kingdom. It would prove that our national importance has been intimately connected with it, and that much of our present greatness and even the happiness of our social system springs from this unsuspected source. It would show us that our mighty empire in the east, that our maritime superiority, and that our progressive advancement in the arts and the sciences have materially depended upon it. Great indeed are the blessings which have been diffused amongst immense masses of mankind by the cultivation of a shrub whose delicate leaf, passing through a variety of hands, forms an incentive to industry, contributes to health, to national riches, and to domestic happiness. The social tea-table is like the fireside of our country, a national delight; and if it be the scene of domestic converse and agreeable relaxation, it should likewise bid us remember that everything connected with the growth and preparation of this favourite herb should

awaken a higher feeling—that of admiration, love, and gratitude to Him who ‘saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.’”

Tea is the national drink of China and Japan; and so far back as 1834 Professor Johnston, in his “Chemistry of Common Life,” estimated that it was consumed by not less than five hundred millions of men, or more than one-third of the whole human race! Excluding China, England appears to be the largest consumer of tea, as shown in the following table compiled by Mr. Mulhall, and printed in his “Dictionary of Statistics:”—

*Consumption of luxuries per inhabitant per year.*

	Ounces.	
	Coffee.	Tea.
United Kingdom . . . . .	15	72
France . . . . .	52	1
Germany . . . . .	83	1
Russia . . . . .	3	7
Austria . . . . .	35	1
Italy . . . . .	18	1
Spain . . . . .	4	1
Belgium and Holland . . . . .	175	8
Denmark . . . . .	76	8
Sweden and Norway . . . . .	88	2
United States . . . . .	115	21

## CHAPTER II.

## THE CULTIVATION OF TEA.

Description of the tea-plant—Indigenous to China—  
Introduced into India—Work in a tea-garden—  
Tea-gatherers in China—A Chinese tea-ballad—How  
tea is cured—How the value of tea is determined.

THE tea-plant formerly occupied a place of honour in every gentleman's green-house; but as it requires much care, and possesses little beauty, it is now rarely seen. Linnæus, the Swedish naturalist, was greatly pleased at a specimen presented to him in 1763, but was unable to keep it alive. Dr. Edward Smith describes the plant as being closely allied to the camellias; but states that the leaf is more pointed, is lance-shaped, and not so thick and hard as that of the camellia. Dr. King Chambers suggests the spending of an afternoon at a classified collection of living



economic plants; such, for instance, as that at the Botanical Gardens, Regent's Park. It is much pleasanter, he points out, to think of tea as connected with the pretty little camellia it comes from, than with blue paper packets, and the despised "grounds" which for ever after acquire an interest in our minds. The tea-plant, although cultivated in various parts of the East, is probably indigenous to China; but is now grown extensively in India. In consequence of the pooriness of the quality of the tea imported by the East India Company, and the necessity of avoiding an entire dependence upon China, the Bengal Government appointed in 1834 a committee for the purpose of submitting a plan for the introduction and cultivation of the tea-plant; and a visit to the frontier station of Upper Assam ended in a determination on the part of Government to cultivate tea in that region.<sup>1</sup> In 1840 the

<sup>1</sup> Russia, also, has become impressed with the importance of growing its own tea; but the efforts of its agriculturists appear to have been unsuccessful. Samples of the produce of the tea-plants which have been acclimatized in Georgia were lately exhibited in the hall of the Agricultural Society of the Caucasus at Tiflis, and appear to have excited considerable interest. The local journals, however,

“Assam Company” was formed, and it is claimed for them that they possess the largest tea plantation in the world. Some idea of the progress of tea cultivation in India may be gathered from the following official figures. In 1850 there was one tea-estate, that of the Assam Company, with 1876 acres under cultivation, yielding 216,000 lbs. In 1870 there were 295 proprietors of tea-estates, with 31,303 acres under cultivation, yielding 6,251,143 lbs. In 1872-73 the area of land held by tea-planters covered 804,582 acres, of which about 75,000 were under cultivation, yielding 14,670,171 lbs. of tea, the average yield per acre being 208 lbs. Every year thousands of acres are being brought under cultivation, and in a short time it seems likely that we shall be independent of China for our supplies of tea. In the year 1879-80 the exports of Indian tea to Great Britain rose to 40,000,000 lbs.,

admit that the samples proved to be rather poor in flavour, and that their aroma resembled that of Chinese teas of very inferior quality. It is pleaded, however, that these specimens were grown by a planter of little experience in the Chinese methods of cultivation and preparation, and hopes are entertained of ultimate success.—*Manchester Examiner*, April 23, 1884.

and in the following year to 42,000,000 lbs. In Ceylon, also, a proportionate increase is taking place. The plant appears to be a native of the island. In Percival's "Account of Ceylon," published in 1805, occurs the following paragraph:—

"The tea-plant has been discovered native in the forests of Ceylon. It grows spontaneously in the neighbourhood of Trincomalee and other northern parts of Ceylon. . . . I have in my possession a letter from an officer in the 80th Regiment, in which he states that he found the real tea-plant in the woods of Ceylon of a quality equal to any that ever grew in China."

A large quantity of tea is now imported from this island, and new plantations, it is reported, are being made every month; day by day more of the primeval forest goes down before the axe of the pioneer, and before another quarter of a century has passed it is anticipated that the teas of our Indian empire will become the most valuable of its products.

The cultivation of tea in India, and the processes to which it is subjected after the leaf is gathered, differ from those of China.

According to Dr. Jameson, the great difficulty of the Indian tea-planter arises from the wonderful fertility of the soil and the strength of the tea-plant. As soon as the plants "flush" the leaf must be plucked, or it deteriorates to such an extent as to become valueless, and at the next "flush" the plant will be found bare of the young leaves. The delay of even a single day may be fatal. The leaf when plucked must be roasted forthwith, or it ferments and becomes valueless, as is also the case in China. There, however, the tea-harvest occurs only four or five times a year, but in India once a fortnight during some seven months of the year. The number of work-people required on a tea-farm may be estimated from the figures given by Dr. Rhind, who says that to manufacture eighty pounds of black tea per day twenty-five tea-gatherers are requisite, and ten driers and sorters; to produce ninety-two pounds of green tea, thirty gatherers and sixteen driers and sorters.

From "A Tea-Planter's Life in Assam" we take the following account of work in a tea-garden:—

“After the soil has been deep-hoed and is quite ready, transplanting from the nursery begins; few men sow the seed at stake. The nursery is made and carefully planted with seed on the first piece of ground that is cleared, so that by the time the remainder of the garden is ready to be planted out the seed has developed into a small plant, with strength enough to stand being transplanted. Holes are prepared at equal distances, into which the young plants are carefully transferred. The greatest caution is exercised in both taking them up and putting them in their new places, that the root shall be neither bent up nor injured in any way. For this work women and children are employed, as it is light, but requires a gentle hand to pat down the earth around the young plant. It speedily accommodates itself to its new circumstances, and thrives wonderfully if the weather is at all propitious. A succession of hot days with no rain has a most disastrous effect on transplants; their heads droop and but a small percentage will be saved, which means that most of the work will have to be done over again. Once started, plenty of cultivation is the only thing required to keep the plant healthy, and it is left undisturbed for a couple of years to increase in size and strength. At the end of the second year, when the cold season has sent the sap down, the pruning knife dispossesses it of its long, straggling top shoots, and reduces it to a height of four feet; every plant is cut to the same level. The third year enables the planter to pluck lightly his first small crop. Year succeeds year, and the crop increases until the eighth or ninth year, when the garden arrives at maturity and yields as much as ever it will. During the rains the gong is beaten at five o'clock every morning, and again at six, thus allowing an hour for those who wish to have something to eat



before commencing the labours of the day. In the cold weather the time for turning out is not so early ; even the Eastern sun is lazier, and there is not so much work to get through. Few of the coolies take anything to eat until eleven o'clock, when they are rung in. The leaf plucked by the women is collected and weighed, and most of the men have finished their allotted day's work by this time, so they retire to their huts to eat the morning meal and to pass the remainder of the day in a luxury of idleness. For the ensuing two or three hours there is perfect rest, except for the unfortunate coolies engaged in the tea-house ; their work cannot be left, and as fast as the leaf is ready it must be fired off, else it would be completely ruined. At two o'clock the women are turned out again to pluck, and those men who have not finished their hoeing have to return to complete their task. About six o'clock the gong sounds again, the leaf is brought in, weighed, and spread, and outdoor work is over for the day. No change can be made in the tea-house work, which goes on steadily, and if there has been much leaf brought in the day before, firing will very frequently last from daybreak until well into the night, or small hours of the morning."

At present, however, the greater proportion of tea consumed in England comes from China and Japan, which produce no less than 325,000,000 lbs. annually, against 52,000,000 lbs. by India.

India may be the tea-country of the future, but China still supplies nearly all the world. Millions of acres are devoted to its culti-

vation, and the late Dr. Wells Williams states that the management of this great branch of industry exhibits some of the best features of Chinese country life. It is only over a portion of each farm that the plant is grown, and its cultivation requires



A TEA PLANTATION.

but little attention, compared with rice and vegetables. The most delicate kinds are looked after and cured by priests in their secluded temples among the hills ; these have often many acolytes, who aid in preparing small lots to be sold at a high price. But the same authority tells us that the work of

picking the leaves, in the first instance, is such a delicate operation that it cannot be intrusted to women. Female labour is paid so badly that they cannot afford to exercise the gentleness which characterizes their general movements; and when they come upon the scene of operations they make the best of their short harvest.

The second gathering takes place when the foliage is fullest. This season is looked forward to by women and children in the tea-districts as their working time. They run in crowds to the middle-men, who have bargained for the leaves on the plants, or apply to farmers who need help. "They strip the twigs in the most summary manner," remarks Dr. Williams, "and fill their baskets with healthy leaves, as they pick out the sticks and yellow leaves, for they are paid in this manner: fifteen pounds is a good day's work, and fourpence is a day's wages. The time for picking lasts only ten or twelve days. There are curing houses, where families who grow and pick their own leaves bring them for sale at the market rate. The sorting employs many hands, for it is an important point in connection with the purity of the

various descriptions, and much care is taken by dealers, in maintaining the quality of their lots, to have them cured carefully as well as sorted properly."

Like hop-picking in this country, tea-picking is very tedious work, but its monotony is relieved by singing during the live-long day. The songs of the hop-pickers are not generally characterized by loftiness of tone or purity of sentiment, but travellers in China speak highly of the songs of the tea-pickers. For instance, Dr. Williams quotes in his book on "The Middle Kingdom" a ballad of the tea-picker, which he considers one of the best of Chinese ballads, if regard be had to the character of the sentiment and metaphors. One or two verses will give an idea of this charming ballad,—

"Where thousand hills the vale enclose, our little hut  
is there,

And on the sloping sides around the tea grows  
everywhere,

And I must rise at early dawn, as busy as can be,  
To get my daily labour done, and pluck the leafy tea.

"The pretty birds upon the boughs sing songs so sweet  
to hear,

And the sky is so delicious now, half drowsy and half  
clear ;

While bending o'er her work each maid will prattle of  
her woe,  
And we talk till our hearts are sorely hurt and tears  
unstinted flow."

The method of curing is thus described :—

"When the leaves are brought in to the curers they are thinly spread on shallow trays to dry off all moisture by two or three hours' exposure. Meanwhile the roasting-pans are heating, and when properly warmed some handfuls of leaves are thrown on them, and rapidly moved and shaken up for four or five minutes. The leaves make a slight crackling noise, become moist and flaccid as the juice is expelled, and give off even a sensible vapour. The whole is then poured out upon the rolling-table, when each workman takes up a handful and makes it into a manageable ball, which he rolls back and forth on the rattan table to get rid of the sap and moisture as the leaves are twisted. This operation chafes the hands even with great precaution. The balls are opened and shaken out, and then passed on to other workmen, who go through the same operation till they reach the head-man, who examines the leaves, to see if they have become curled. When properly done, and cooled, they are returned to the iron pans, under which a low charcoal fire is burning in the brickwork which supports them, and there kept in motion by the hand. If they need another rolling on the table it is now given them. An hour or more is spent in this manipulation, when they are dried to a dull-green colour, and can be put away for sifting and sorting. This colour becomes brighter after the exposure in sifting the cured leaves through sieves of various sizes; they are also winnowed to separate the dust, and afterwards sorted into



the various descriptions of green tea. Finally, the finer kinds are again fired three or four times, and the coarser kinds, as Twankay, Hyson, and Hyson-skin, once. The others furnish the young Hyson, gunpowder, imperial, &c. Tea cured in this way is called *luh cha*, or 'green tea,' by the Chinese, while the other, or black tea, is termed *hung cha*, or 'red tea,' each name being taken from the tint of the infusion. After the fresh leaves are allowed to lie exposed to the air on the bamboo trays over night or several hours, they are thrown into the air and tossed about and patted till they become soft; a heap is made of these wilted leaves, and left to lie for an hour or more, when they have become moist and dark in colour. They are then thrown on the hot pans for five minutes and rolled on the rattan table, previous to exposure out of doors for three or four hours on sieves, during which time they are turned over and opened out. After this they get a second roasting and rolling, to give them their final curl. When the charcoal fire is ready, a basket, shaped something like an hour-glass, is placed end-wise over it, having a sieve in the middle, on which the leaves are thinly spread. When dried five minutes in this way they undergo another rolling, and are then thrown into a heap, until all the lot has passed over the fire. When this firing is finished, the leaves are opened out and are again thinly spread on the sieve in the basket for a few minutes, which finishes the drying and rolling for most of the heap, and makes the leaves a uniform black. They are now replaced in the basket in greater mass, and pushed against its sides by the hands, in order to allow the heat to come up through the sieve and the vapour to escape; a basket over all retains the heat, but the contents are turned over until perfectly dry and the leaves become uniformly dark."

When this process is completed, every nerve is strained to put the tea into the market quickly, “and in the best possible condition ; for, although it is said that the Chinese do not drink it until it is a year old, the value of new tea is superior to that of old ; and the longer the duration of a voyage in which a great mass of tea is packed up in a closed hold, the greater the probability that the process of fermentation will be set up. Hence has arisen the great strife to bring the first cargo of the season to England, and the fastest and most skilfully commanded ships are engaged in the trade, both for the profit and honour of success.”

Dr. E. Smith, an authority upon the subject, showed that the value of tea is determined in the market by its flavour and body ; by the aromatic qualities of its essential oil and the chemical elements of the leaf, rather than by the chemical composition of its juices. Delicacy and fulness of flavour, with a certain body, are the required characteristics of the market. The same authority tells us that the tea-taster prepares his samples from a uniform and very small

quantity, viz. the weight of a new sixpence, and infuses it for five minutes with about four ounces of water in a covered pottery vessel; and in order to prevent injury to his health by repeated tasting, does not swallow the fluid. He must have naturally a sensitive and refined taste, should be always in good health, and able to estimate flavour with the same minuteness at all times.



## CHAPTER III.

## TEA-MEETINGS.

The' teetotalers and tea—Extravagance of ladies—Joseph Livesey—Reformed drunkards as water-carriers—One thousand two hundred persons at one tea-party—How they brewed their tea—How the Anti-Corn-Law League reached the people—Singing the praises of tea—Tea-drinking contests—"Tea-fights"—Hints on tea-meeting fare—Tea as a revolutionary agent.

How did tea-meetings originate? According to a writer in the *Newcastle Chronicle*, the teetotalers were the first to introduce these popular social gatherings. "Originally started as a medium of raising funds," he says, "they were conducted in a very different style from that so widely adopted at the present day. Our friends knew of no such thing as a contract for the supply of the viands at so much a head, and they had no experience to teach them how many square

yards of bread a pound of butter could be made to cover. Our wives and sweethearts then undertook the purveying and management of our tea-parties. Each took a table accommodating from sixteen to twenty persons, and presided in person. And, oh! what hearty, jolly, comfortable gatherings we used to have in the old Music Hall in Blakett Street, amidst the abundance of singing hinnies, hot wigs, and spice loaf, served up in tempting display, tea of the finest flavour served in the best china from the most elegant of teapots, accompanied with the brightest of spoons, the thickest of cream, and the blindest of smiles! It is much to be regretted that this excess of gratification should have produced an evil which ultimately changed the character of these pleasant assemblies. A spirit of rivalry among the ladies as to who should have the richest and most elegantly-furnished table became so prevalent that their lords and masters were obliged to protest against the excessive expenditure; and thus the ladies, not being allowed to have their own way, declined to take any further share in the



work. This was a great misfortune, as the proceeds considerably augmented the resources of the Temperance Society."

No such fate met these popular gatherings in other towns. They were conducted on a scale of great magnitude, especially in the birthplace of the temperance movement in England, the town of Preston. Here lives Joseph Livesey, the patriarch of the movement, now in his ninety-first year. The third tea-party of the Preston Temperance Society in 1833, at Christmas, is thus described:—

"The range of rooms was most elegantly fitted up for the occasion. The walls were all covered with white cambric, ornamented with rosettes of various colours, and elegantly interspersed with a variety of evergreens. The windows, fifty-six in number, were also festooned and ornamented with considerable taste. The tables, 630 feet in length, were covered with white cambric. At the upper and lower ends of each side-room were mottoes in large characters, 'temperance, sobriety, peace, plenty,' and at the centre of the room connecting the others was displayed in similar characters the motto, 'happiness.' The tables were divided and numbered, and eighty sets of brilliant tea-requisites, to accommodate parties of ten persons each, were placed upon the table, with two candles to each party. A boiler, also capable of containing 200 gallons, was set up in Mr. Halliburton's yard, to heat

water for the occasion, and was managed admirably by those reformed characters. About forty men, principally reformed drunkards, were busily engaged as waiters, water-carriers, &c.; those who waited at the tables wore white aprons, with 'temperance' printed on the front. The tables were loaded with provisions, and plenty seemed to smile upon the guest. A thousand tickets were printed and sold at 6*d.* and 1*s.* each, but the whole company admitted is supposed to be about 1200; 820 sat down at once, and the rest were served afterwards. The pleasure and enjoyment which beamed from every countenance would baffle every attempt at description, and the contrast betwixt this company and those where intoxicating liquors are used is an unanswerable argument in favour of temperance associations."

A tea-party at Liverpool, in 1836, was attended by a greater number, and the account shows very clearly that the early temperance gatherings will contrast favourably with the large Blue Ribbon meetings held at the present time:—

"The great room where tea was provided was fitted up in a style of elegance surpassing anything we could have imagined. The platform and the orchestra for the band were most tastefully decorated. The beams and walls of the building were richly ornamented with evergreens and appropriate mottoes. The tables were laid out with tea-equipages interspersed with flower-pots filled with roses. When the parties sat down, in number about 2500, a most imposing sight presented itself. Wealth, beauty,

and intelligence were present; and great numbers of reformed characters respectably clad, with their smiling partners, added no little interest to the scene, which was beyond the power of language to describe."

In 1837 the *Isle of Man Temperance Guardian* reported a tea-meeting at Leeds, at which nearly 700 persons sat down; another at Bury, where "500 of both sexes sat down." A tea-party at Exeter is thus described:—"The arrangements were very judicious, and nearly 400 made merry with the 'cup that cheers, but not inebriates,' among whom were numbers of highly respectable ladies and citizens of Exeter. This novel feature presented a most interesting and gratifying sight, from the spirit of cordiality and good-feeling which pervaded it, and cannot but have the most beneficial effect upon society." For the benefit of societies which had not adopted this new and successful method of reaching the public, the secretary of the Bristol Society gave the following account of a Christmas tea-party:—"The tables were provided with tea-services, milk, sugar, cakes and bread and butter, and one waiter appointed to each, who was fur-

nished with a bright, clean tea-kettle, while the tea, which was previously made, stood in a corner of the room in large barrels, with a tap in each, from which each waiter drew his supply as required, and filled the cups when empty, without noise, confusion, or delay." The following receipt for tea-making was given in the *Preston Temperance Advocate*, of July, 1836:—

"At the tea-parties in Birmingham they made the tea in large tins, about a yard square, and a foot deep, each one containing as much as will serve about 250 persons. The tea is tied loosely in bags, about  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. in each. At the top there is an aperture, into which the boiling water is conveyed by a pipe from the boiler, and at one corner there is a tap, from which the tea when brewed is drawn out. It may be either sweetened or milked, or both, if thought best, while in the tins. Being thus made, it can be carried in teapots, or jugs, where those cannot be had. Capital tea was made at the last festival by this plan."

Considering the high price of tea and of bread at that time, it is scarcely credible that a charge of 9*d.* per head for men and women, and of 6*d.* for "youths under fourteen," was found sufficient to defray the cost, as well as to benefit the funds of the Temperance Society. The value of such

gatherings to the temperance movement it is impossible to estimate. Weaned from the use of fiery beverages, the reformed drunkard needed a substitute which would be at once harmless, as well as stimulating. In tea he found exactly what he wanted. He needed, moreover, company of an elevating kind; and in the tea-party he found the craving for the companionship of men and women fully satisfied. It was by this agency chiefly that the converts to teetotalism were kept together and instructed in the principles of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors; and we are not surprised that the consumption of drink fell off largely in consequence. Dr. J. H. Curtis, writing in 1836, contended that the introduction of tea and coffee into general use had done much towards reducing the consumption of intoxicating drinks; and, although the expenditure upon intoxicating drinks still remains a formidable amount, there can be no doubt that the general use of tea has lessened the consumption of alcohol.

These gatherings continue very popular, but do not draw such large numbers as in the early days of the movement; but it is



open to question whether the time spent upon them might not be more profitably employed. A writer in the *Band of Hope Chronicle* (January, 1882) calls attention to this aspect of tea-meetings:—"There should be," he contends, "moderation even in tea-drinking, and when we hear of four or five hours at a stretch being spent over this process at public gatherings, as it seems the good folks do in some parts of the Isle of Man, one cannot but feel there is need for improvement. What would be thought if the time were occupied with the consumption of stronger beverages than tea. There would be little prospect of orderliness in the after-proceedings then; so, anyhow, the tea-drinkers have the best of it even when they are at their worst."

The example of the teetotalers was followed by other reformers. The *Preston Temperance Advocate*, of October, 1837, says:—"A tea-party was held at Salford, in honour of the return of Joseph Brotherton, Esq., M.P., for this town, to which he was invited. It was attended by 1050 persons, nearly 900 of whom were ladies, and the spectacle presented to the eye by such an assemblage was one of

the most pleasing which I have ever witnessed." The Anti-Corn-Law League also adopted similar means of bringing their friends and subscribers together. "On the 23rd of November, 1842," writes Mr. Archibald Prentice, the historian of the movement, "the first of a series of deeply-interesting *soirées* in Yorkshire, in furtherance of the great object of Corn-Law Repeal, was celebrated in the saloon, beautifully decorated for the occasion, of the Philosophical Hall, Huddersfield. The occasion, says the *Leeds Mercury*, was one of high importance, not only for the dignity and benevolence of the object contemplated, but for the enthusiastic spirit manifested by the assembly of both sexes, of the first respectability, extensive in number, and intelligent and influential in its character. More than 600 persons sat down to tea, and more than double that number would have been present had it been possible to provide accommodation." Mr. Prentice records many other tea-meetings attended by 600 and 800 persons. "In Manchester," writes Mr. Henry Ashworth, "a number of ladies took up the Corn-Law question, and

held an Anti-Corn-Law tea-party, which was attended by 830 persons."

A hymn was specially composed for use at temperance gatherings, its purport being to



WATERING A TEA-PLANTATION.

show the superiority of tea-meetings over public-house meetings. It consisted of eight verses, and was printed in the *Moral Reformer* of February, 1833. One verse will give an idea of its character :—

“ Pure, refined, domestic bliss,  
 Social meetings such as this,  
 Banish sorrow, cares dismiss,  
 And cheer all our lives.”

Total abstinence has not yet found much favour among artists, who too often paint the fleeting pleasures of the wine-cup rather than the enduring pleasures of temperance ; but in Mr. Collingwood Banks we have an artist who can sing the praises of a cup of tea as well as paint the charms of a fire-side tea-table. To him we are indebted for the following song, which ought speedily to become popular among temperance societies :—

“ THE CUP FOR ME.

“ Let others sing the praise of wine,  
 Let others deem its joys divine,  
 Its fleeting bliss shall ne’er be mine,  
     Give me a cup of tea !  
 The cup that soothes each aching pain,  
 Restores the sick to health again,  
 Steals not from heart, steals not from brain,  
     A friend when others flee.

“ When sorrow frowns, what power can cheer,  
 Or chase away the falling tear  
 Without the vile effects of beer,  
     Like Pekoe or Bohea ?

What makes the old man young and strong,  
Like Hyson, Congou, or Souchong,  
Which leave the burthen of his song  
A welcome cup of tea.

“Then hail the grave Celestial band,  
With planning mind, and planting hand,  
And let us bless that golden land  
So far across the sea ;  
Whose hills and vales give fertile birth  
To that fair shrub of priceless worth,  
Which yields each son of mother earth  
A fragrant cup of tea.”

Another hymn in praise of tea was used in Cornwall, and often sung at tea-meetings by the Rev. J. G. Hartley, a minister of the United Methodist Free Churches. The lines possess little poetical merit, but are worth quoting on account of the pleasure with which they have been received by tens of thousands of people, and of their influence in unlocking the pockets of the people when the box went round.

“When vanish’d spirits intertwine,  
And social sympathies combine,  
What of such friendship is a sign ?  
A cup of tea, a cup of tea.

“When dulness seizes on the mind,  
And thought no liberty can find,  
What can the captive powers unbind ?  
A cup of tea, a cup of tea.



“ If one has given another pain,  
And distant coldness both maintain,  
What helps to make them friends again ?  
A cup of tea, a cup of tea.

“ And if discourse be sluggish growing,  
Whate’er the cause to which ’tis owing,  
What’s sure to set the tongue a-going ?  
A cup of tea, a cup of tea.

“ If things of use or decoration  
Require a friendly consultation,  
What greatly aids the conversation ?  
A cup of tea, a cup of tea.

“ And lastly let us not forget  
The occasion upon which we’re met,  
What helps to move a chapel-debt ?  
A cup of tea, a cup of tea.”

“ It has served us many a good turn,” writes Mr. Hartley, “ and has helped to clear many a chapel-debt.” It would be difficult, no doubt, in our day to cite a single case of a tea-party attended by 500 persons ; but if large gatherings are fewer, small ones are more frequent. Every chapel, every church, every day-school, every Sunday-school, every religious association has at least four tea-parties a year : and thus not only is a very large amount of tea consumed, but a very

large number of people are brought under good influences.

In rural districts the Christmas tea-party is the event of the year. It is attended by all the lads and lasses in the neighbourhood; by the milkmaids and the ploughmen, who make sad havoc with the cake. Wonderful, also, is the amount of tea consumed. In fact a tea-drinking contest takes place at these annual reunions. At any rate he is the hero of the table who can drink the most.

We have referred to the decreasing popularity of tea-meetings, and believe that one way of reviving the interest in these festivals would be to provide better refreshments, as well as a greater variety. From the Land's End to John O'Groats, the bill of fare is limited to currant-cake and bread and butter of the cheapest kind. In some cases, where the charge is a shilling per head, beef and sandwiches are provided. An announcement of "a knife and fork tea" at a Primitive Methodist Chapel never fails to secure a good attendance of the members and friends. In Lancashire such meetings are not unfrequently called "tea-fights," probably on

account of the scramble for sandwiches which characterizes the proceedings. But neither cake nor sandwich is sufficient to tempt all who are interested in these social entertainments. The promoters would do well to follow the example of the Vegetarian Society, and provide more fruit and substantial bread, both white and brown. In summer all the fruits in season should be placed upon the tables, and in winter stewed fruits. The following hints on "Tea-Meeting Fare," written by the late Mr. R. N. Sheldrick, who was an active missionary agent of the Vegetarian Society, may prove of service to all who cater for tea-meetings:—

"1. Provide good tea, pure, fresh-ground coffee, cocoa, &c. Let the making of these decoctions be superintended by an experienced friend; serve up nice and hot, but without milk or sugar, leaving these to be added or not, according to individual tastes.

"2. Procure a plentiful supply of good whole-meal wheaten (brown) bread, some white bread, some currant-cake—home-baked if possible, without dripping or lard; two or three varieties of Reading biscuits, such as Osborne, tea, picnic, arrowroot, &c.

"3. Purchase from the nearest market sufficient lettuce, kale, celery, cress, and other fresh salads according to season; also provide a liberal supply of figs, muscatels, almonds, nuts, oranges, apples, pears, plums, cherries,

strawberries, peaches, or such other fruit as may be in season.

“ 4. Take care, whatever arrangement be adopted, not to let these things be hidden away until the latter part of the feast. Fruits should have the place of honour. The plates or baskets of fruit should have convenient positions along the tables with the bread and butter, biscuits, &c.

“ 5. Place the arrangements under the control of a well-selected committee of ladies, who will see that the tables are tastefully laid out, and that everybody is supplied. Let there be also, if possible, a profusion of fresh-cut flowers.”

Tea, it is true, has not yet worked a complete revolution in the habits of the people, but it has done much to lessen intemperance. Dr. Sigmond, writing nearly half a century ago, referred to its influences for good : “ Tea has in most instances,” he said, “ been substituted for fermented or spirituous liquors, and the consequence has been a general improvement in the health and in the morals of a vast number of persons. The tone, the strength, and the vigour of the human body are increased by it ; there is a greater capability of enduring fatigue ; the mind is rendered more susceptible of the innocent pleasures of life, and of acquiring information. Whole classes of the community have been rendered sober, careful, and pro-

vident. The wasted time that followed upon intemperance kept individuals poor, who are now thriving in the world and exhibiting the results of honest industry. Men have become healthier, happier, and better for the exchange they have made. They have given up a debasing habit for an innocent one. The individuals who were outcasts, miserable, abandoned, have become independent and a blessing to society. Their wives and their children hail them on their return home from their daily labours with their prayers and fondest affections, instead of shunning their presence, fearful of some barbarity, or some outrage against their better feelings; cheerfulness and animation follow upon their slumbers, instead of the wretchedness and remorse which the wakening drunkard ever experiences."

This picture, it will be observed, is a little over-coloured; but, in the main, it will be granted that tea and other similar beverages have done a good deal to displace spirituous and fermented liquors. The use of tea has certainly resulted in great benefit to the health and morals of the people.



## CHAPTER IV.

## HOW TO MAKE TEA.

The Siamese method of making tea—A three-legged tea-pot—Advice of a Chinese poet—How tea should be made—How Abernethy made tea for his guests—The “bubbling and loud-hissing urn”—Tate’s description of a tea-table—The tea of public institutions—Rev. Dr. Lansdell on Russian tea—The art of tea-making described—The kind of water to be used. The Chinese method of making tea—Invalids’ tea—Words to nurses, by Miss Nightingale.

THE mode of preparation of tea for the table has always given rise to discussion. Different nations have different methods. In Siam one method was thus described in a book entitled “Relation of the Voyage to Siam by Six Jesuits,” which was published in 1685. “In the East they prepare tea in this manner: when the water is well boiled, they pour it upon the tea, which they have put

into an earthen pot, proportionably to what they intend to take (the ordinary proportion is as much as one can take up with the finger and thumb for a pint of water); then they cover the pot until the leaves are sunk to the bottom of it, and afterwards serve it about in china dishes to be drunk as hot as can be, without sugar, or else with a little sugar-candy in the mouth; and upon that tea more boiling water may be poured, and so it may be made to serve twice. These people drink of it several times a day, but do not think it wholesome to take it fasting."

In "Recreative Science" (vol. i., 1821) there appears a very curious note relating to the translation of a Chinese poem. The editor says,—“Kien Lung, the Emperor of the Celestial Empire, which is in the vernacular China, was also a poet, and he has been good enough to give us a receipt also—would that all didactic poetry meddled with what its author understood. The poet Kien did, and he has left the following recipe how to make tea, which, for the benefit of the ladies who study the domestic cookery, is inserted: ‘set an old three-legged teapot

over a slow fire; fill it with water of melted snow; boil it just as long as is necessary to turn fish white or lobsters red; pour it on the leaves of choice, in a cup of Youe. Let it remain till the vapour subsides into a thin mist, floating on the surface. Drink this precious liquor at your leisure, and thus drive away the five causes of sorrow.' ”

Poets, as everybody knows, are allowed a good deal of licence, and tea-maids may be pardoned if they are sceptical of the value of the advice of the Chinese poet. How, then, should tea be made? First and foremost, remarks Dr. Joseph Pope, it should be remembered that tea is an infusion, not an extract. An old verse runs thus:—

“ The fragrant shrub in China grows,  
The leaves are all we see,  
And these, when water o’er them flows,  
Make what we call our tea.”

Dr. Pope lays emphasis on the word *flows*; it does not say *soak*. There is, he contends, an instantaneous graciousness, a momentary flavour that must be caught if we would rightly enjoy tea. Assuredly Dr. Abernethy, the celebrated surgeon, must be credited

with the possession of this “instantaneous graciousness.” “Abernethy,” said Dr. Carlyon, in his “Early Years and Late Reflections,” “never drank tea himself, but he frequently asked a few friends to come and take tea at his rooms. Upon such occasions, as I infer from what I myself witnessed, his custom was to walk about the room and talk most agreeably upon such topics as he thought likely to interest his company, which did not often consist of more than two or three persons. As soon as the tea-table was set in order, and the boiling water ready for making the infusion, the fragrant herb was taken, not from an ordinary tea-caddy, but from a packet consisting of several envelopes curiously put together, in the centre of which was the tea. Of this he used at first as much as would make a good cup for each of the party; and to meet fresh demands I observed that he invariably put an additional tea-spoonful into the teapot; the excellence of the beverage thus prepared insuring him custom. He had likewise a singular knack of supplying each cup with sugar from a considerable distance, by a jerk

of the hand, which discharged it from the sugar-tongs into the cup with unerring certainty, as he continued his walk around the table, scarcely seeming to stop whilst he performed these and the other requisite evolutions of the entertainment."

If every woman had treated her guests in the same manner, there would have been little outcry against tea. The innovation of a "bubbling and loud-hissing urn" was strongly condemned by Dr. Sigmond, who, writing in 1839, after quoting Cowper, remarked: "Thus sang one of our most admired poets, who was feelingly alive to the charms of social life; but, alas! for the domestic happiness of many of our family circles, this meal has lost its character, and many of those innovations which despotic fashion has introduced have changed one of the most agreeable of our daily enjoyments. It is indeed a question amongst the devotees to the tea-table, whether the bubbling urn has been practically an improvement upon our habits; it has driven from us the old national kettle, once the pride of the fireside. The urn may be fairly called the offspring



of indolence; it has deprived us, too, of many of those felicitous opportunities of which the gallant forefathers of the present race availed themselves to render them amiable in the eyes of the fair sex, when presiding over the distribution

“Of the Soumblo, the Imperial tea,  
Names not unknown, and sanative Bohea.”

The consequence of this injudicious change is, that one great enjoyment is lost to the tea-drinker—that which consists in having the tea infused in water actually hot, and securing an equal temperature when a fresh supply is required. Such, too, is what those who have preceded us would have called the degeneracy of the period in which we live, that now the tea-making is carried on in the housekeeper's room, or in the kitchen—

“For monstrous novelty, and strange disguise,  
We sacrifice our tea, till household joys  
And comforts cease.”

What, he asks, can be more delightful than those social days described by Tate, the poet-laureate?

“ When in discourse of nature’s mystic powers  
And noblest themes we pass the well-spent hours,  
Whilst all around the virtues—sacred band,  
And listening graces, pleased attendants stand.  
Thus our tea-conversations we employ.  
Where, with delight, instructions we enjoy,  
Quaffing, without the waste of time or wealth,  
The sovereign drink of pleasure and of health.”

Fortunately for the lovers of the teapot and the kettle, a change in the fashion of making tea is taking place, the “loud-hissing urn” being now confined almost exclusively to a public tea-party and the coffee tavern. The quality of tea and coffee supplied by the latter institution has long been considered *the blot* upon an otherwise excellent movement. Not too severely did the *Daily Telegraph* speak a short time ago against the atrocious stuff supplied under the name of tea in public institutions. The editor said,—

“The very look of it is no longer encouraging. It is either a pale, half-chilled, unsatisfactory beverage, or it contains a dark black-brown settlement from over-boiled tea-leaves. The consumption of tea, no doubt, in England is enormous, and we boast to foreigners that we are fond of our tea; the fashion of tea-drinking, owing mainly to our example, has extended to France, once extremely heretical on the point; and yet where is the foreigner to

find a good cup of tea in England? At the railway stations? Very rarely. At the restaurants? Scarcely ever. And at the newly-started tea and coffee palaces, which are to promote sobriety, the great and crying complaint is that the tea and coffee are so poor that the best-intentioned people are forced back to the dangerous public-house, in order to obtain a little stimulant, for it is idle to deny that both tea and coffee are stimulating to the constitution. Everywhere a great reform in tea is required. Once on a time no confectioner, railway-station, or refreshment-house could rival the home-made brew, made under the eye of the mistress of the household, with the kettle on the hob and the ingredients at hand; but now that the good old custom of tea-making is considered unladylike, and the manufacture has been handed over to the servants, the great charm of the beverage has virtually departed. No one can conscientiously say that they like English tea as at present administered, for the very good reason that it is no longer prepared scientifically. The English fashion of drinking tea would be laughed to scorn by the educated Chinaman or the accomplished Russian. Indeed, it is surprising in how few houses a good cup of tea can be obtained now that it has become unfashionable for the mistress of the establishment, not only to preside over her own tea-table, but to have complete sway over that most necessary article, a kettle of boiling water. The Chinese never dream of stewing their tea, as we too often do in England. They do not drown it with milk or cream, or alter its taste with sugar, but lightly pour boiling water on a small portion of the leaves. It is then instantly poured off again, by which the Chinaman obtains only the more volatile and stimulating portion of its principle. The most delicious of all tea, however, can be tasted in Russia

—supposed to import the best of the Chinese leaves, as it imports the best of French champagne.”

According to the Rev. Dr. Lansdell, however, the Russians do not pay extravagantly for their tea. “When crossing the Pacific,”



GATHERING TEA-LEAVES.

he says, “I fell in with a tea-merchant homeward bound from China, and from him I gathered that three-fourths of the Russian trade is done in medium and common teas, such as are sold in London in bond from 1s. 2d.

down to 8*d.* per English pound, exclusive of the home duty. The remaining fourth of their trade includes some of the very best teas grown in the Ning Chou districts—teas which the Russians will have at any price, and for which in a bad year they may have to pay as much as 3*s.* a pound in China, though in ordinary years they cost from 2*s.* upwards. The flowery Pekoe, or blossom tea, costs also about 3*s.* in China.” But Dr. Lansdell heard of some kind of yellow tea which cost as much as five guineas a pound, the Emperor of China being supposed to enjoy its monopoly ; but a friend of the doctor told him that he did not think it distinguishable from that sold at 5*s.* a pound.

The excellence of the Russian tea is attributed, in part, to the fact that it is carried overland. “Whilst travelling eastwards,” says Dr. Lansdell, “we had frequently met caravans or carts carrying tea. These caravans sometimes reach to upwards of 100 horses ; and as they go at walking pace, and when they come to a river are taken over by ferry, it is not matter for surprise that merchandise should be three months in coming



from Irkutsk to Moscow." Whatever the cause, all travellers eulogize the Russians as tea-makers. Dr. Sigmond, for instance, says,—

"My own experience of the excellence of tea in Russia arose out of a curious incident, which occurred to me during a hasty visit I made to that highly-interesting country. Previous to this adventure, I had been in the habit of taking coffee as my ordinary beverage, and was by no means satisfied with it. I had no idea of the prevailing habit of tea-drinking, previous to my arrival, at Moscow. In the course of the afternoon I left my hotel alone, obtaining from my servant a card, with the name of the street, *La Rue de Demetrius*, written upon it. I wandered about that magnificent citadel, the Kremlin, until dark, and I found myself at some distance from the point from which I started, and I endeavoured to return to it, and asked several persons the way to my street, of which they all appeared ignorant. I therefore got into one of the *drotzskies*, and intimated to my Cossack driver that I should be enabled to point out my own street. Although we could not understand each other, we did our mutual signs; and with the greatest cheerfulness and good-nature this man drove me through every street, but I could nowhere recognize my hotel. He therefore drove me to his humble abode in the environs; he infused the finest tea that I had ever seen in a peculiarly-shaped saucepan, set it on a stove, and this, when nearly boiled, he poured out; and a more delicious beverage, nor one more acceptable after a hard day's fatigue and anxiety, I have not tasted."

Other travellers refer to the excellence of

tea in Russia. If we could have an improvement in the quality of tea made in England, we feel sure that a decrease in the consumption of intoxicating drinks would result.

Some reform has already taken place at railway-stations. For the reduction of the price of a cup of tea from sixpence to fourpence on the Great Northern Railway the public are indebted to the Hon. Reginald Capel, Chairman of the Refreshment-Rooms and Hotels' Committee of that company. On the Midland Railway, also, a reduction in the price of non-intoxicating beverages has been made. At the present time the coffee taverns stand most in need of reform.

With the object of inducing our tea-makers to reform their methods of tea-making, we quote some important recommendations of leading physicians. Dr. King Chambers, in his valuable manual of "Diet in Health and Disease," remarks that the uses of tea are (1) to give an agreeable flavour to warm water required as a drink; (2) to soothe the nervous system when it is in an uncomfortable state from hunger, fatigue, or mental excitement. The best tea therefore is, he contends, that which

is pleasantest to the taste of the educated consumer, and which contains most of the characteristic sedative principles. As Dr. Poore has pointed out, tannic acid, which is one of the dangers as well as one of the pleasures of tea, is largely present in the common teas used by the poor. "The rich man," he says, "who wishes to avoid an excess of tannic acid in the 'cup that cheers,' does not allow the water to stand on the tea for more than five, or at most eight minutes, and the resulting beverage is aromatic, not too astringent, and wholesome. The poor man or poor woman allows the tea to simmer on the hob for indefinite periods, with the result that a highly astringent and unwholesome beverage is obtained. There can be no doubt that the habit of drinking excessive quantities of strong astringent tea is a not uncommon cause of that atonic dyspepsia, which seems to be the rule rather than the exception among poor women of the class of sempstresses." The late Dr. Edward Smith devoted considerable attention to this subject, and we cannot do better than quote his observations :—"The aim should be to

extract all the aroma and dried juices containing theine, with only so much of the substance of the leaf as may give fulness, or, as it is called, *body* to the infusion. If the former be defective, the respiratory action of the tea and the agreeableness of the flavour will be lessened, whilst if the latter be in excess there will be a degree of bitterness which will mash the aromatic flavour. As the theine is without flavour, its presence or absence cannot be determined by the taste of the tea. All agree, therefore, that the tea should be cooked in water, and that the water should be at the boiling-point when used; but there is not an agreement as to the duration of the infusing process. If the tea be scented or artificially flavoured, the aroma may be extracted in two minutes, but the proper aromatic oil of the tea requires at least five minutes for its removal. If flavour is to be considered, it is clear that an inferior tea should not be infused so long as a fine tea.

“The kind of water is believed to have great influence over the process; soft water is preferred. The Chinese direction is, ‘Take it from a running stream; that from mill-springs

is the best, river-water is the next, and well-water is the worst ;' that is to say, take water well mixed with air. Hence avoid hard water, but prefer tap-water or running water to well-water. It is the practice of a good housewife in the country to send to a brook for water to make tea, whilst she will use the well water for drinking." The mode of making tea in China is to put the tea into a cup, to pour hot water upon it, and then to drink the infusion off the leaves. While wandering over the tea-districts of China, Mr. Fortune only once met with sugar and a tea-spoon. "The merchant invited us to drink tea," writes the Rev. Dr. Lansdell, who recently visited the Mongolian frontier at Maimatchin, "and told us that the Chinese use this beverage without sugar or milk three times a day ; namely, at rising, at noon, and at seven in the evening. They have substantial meals at nine in the morning and four in the afternoon." Dr. King Chambers considers tea most refreshing to the dyspeptic if made in the Russian fashion, with a slice of lemon on which a little sugar-candy has been sprinkled, instead of milk or cream. One small cup of an evening is



enough. He also gives the following receipt for making invalids' tea:—

“Pour into a small china or earthenware teapot a cup of quite boiling water, empty it out, and while it is still hot and steaming put in the tea and enough boiling water to wet it thoroughly, and set it close to the fire to steam three or four minutes. Then pour in the quantity of water required, boiling from the kettle, and it is ready for use.” Miss Nightingale offers a word of advice to nurses upon the amount of tea which should be given. “A great deal too much against tea is,” she remarks, “said by wise people, and a great deal too much of it is given to the sick by foolish people. When you see the natural and almost universal craving in English sick for their tea, you cannot but feel that Nature knows what she is about. But a little tea or coffee restores them quite as much as a great deal; and a great deal of tea, and especially of coffee, impairs the little power of digestion they have; yet a nurse, because she sees how one or two cups of tea or coffee restore her patient, thinks three or four cups will do twice as much. This is

not the case at all: it is, however, certain that there is nothing yet discovered which is a substitute to the English patient for his cup of tea."



## CHAPTER V.

## TEA AND PHYSICAL ENDURANCE.

Tea and dry bread *versus* porter and beefsteak—Tea for soldiers—Opinion of Professor Parkes—Tea *versus* spirits—Tea and Tel-el-Kebir—Lord Wolseley's testimony—Pegs and teapots—Temperance in the navy—Drinking the health of her Majesty in a bowl of tea—Cycling and tea-drinking—Mountain-climbing—Tea in the harvest-field—Cold tea as a summer drink.

TEA is not only a valuable stimulant to the mind, but is the most beneficial drink to those engaged in fatiguing work. Dr. Jackson, whom Buckle quotes as an authority, testified in 1845, that even for those who have to go through great fatigues a breakfast of tea and dry bread is more strengthening than one of beefsteak and porter. "I have been," says Dr. Inman, "a careful reader of all those accounts which tell of endurance of prolonged fatigue, and have

been touched with the almost unanimous evidence in favour of vegetable diet and tea as a beverage, that I have determined in every instance where long nursing, as of a fever patient, is required, to recommend nothing stronger than tea for the watcher." In the army, as well as in the hospital, tea is slowly, but surely, supplanting the use of grog. "As an article of diet for soldiers," remarked Professor Parkes, "tea is most useful. The hot infusion, like that of coffee, is potent both against heat and cold; is most useful in great fatigue, especially in hot climates, and also has a great purifying effect on water. Tea is so light, is so easily carried and the infusion is so readily made, that it should form the drink *par excellence* of the soldier on service. There is also a belief that it lessens the susceptibility to malaria, but the evidence on this point is imperfect."

Admiral Inglefield, writing in January, 1881, strongly commended the use of tea and coffee as heat producers.

"During this almost Arctic weather, and in the midst of these almost Arctic surroundings, permit me as an old Arctic officer to plead for a short hearing in behalf of

those whose lives may still be in jeopardy for want of some practical experience how to take care of themselves. Among the working classes there is an all-prevailing idea that nothing is so effectual to keep out cold as a raw nip of spirits, and this delusion is to their minds justified, because they find the "raw nip" setting the heart and blood in more rapid motion; and heat being generated while the influence remains, a sensation of warmth is the natural result, but after a short space reaction sets in, and a slower circulation must ensue. In the evidence given before the last Arctic Committee, of which I was a member, all the witnesses were unanimous in the opinion that spirits taken to keep out cold was a fallacy, and that nothing was more effectual than a good fatty diet, and hot tea or coffee as a drink. Seamen who journeyed with me up the shores of Wellington Channel, in the Arctic Regions, after one day's experience of rum-drinking, came to the conclusion that tea, which was the only beverage I used, was much preferable, and they quickly derived great advantage from its use while undergoing hard work and considerable cold. If cabmen, watchmen, railway servants, and those who from the nature of their duties are compelled to expose themselves during this inclement weather could be persuaded to give up entirely the use of spirituous liquors and use hot tea or coffee for a beverage, I can promise that they would be better fortified to withstand the cold, they would experience more lasting comfort, and there would be more shillings to take to their homes on a Saturday night; happily, also, the trial of temperance for a time, to meet the present emergency, might become with some the habit of a life."

The soldiers who captured Tel-el-Kebir



drank nothing but tea. It was served out to them three times a day. The correspondent of the *Daily News* (12th of September, 1882) wrote, "Sir Garnet Wolseley having ordered that the troops under his command should be allowed daily a triple allowance of tea, extra supplies of that article are being sent out from the commissariat stores to Ismailia. It is stated that the extra issue of tea is very acceptable to the men, who find a decoction of the mild stimulant in their canteen-bottles the most refreshing and invigorating beverage they can carry with them on the march."

Lord Wolseley having been asked for his temperance testimony, replied in an interesting letter, in which he strongly commended the use of tea. "Once during my military career," he says, "it fell to my lot to lead a brigade through a desert country for a distance of over 600 miles. I fed the men as well as I could, but no one, *officer* or *private*, had anything stronger than tea to drink during the expedition. The men had peculiarly hard work to do, and they did it well, and without a murmur. We seemed to have

left crime and sickness behind us with the 'grog,' for the conduct of all was most exemplary, and no one was ever ill. I have always attributed much of our success upon that occasion to the fact that no form of intoxicating liquor formed any portion of the daily ration."

Evidence from other quarters shows very conclusively that soldiers would rather drink tea than grog. In an account of the return march through the Khyber Pass, the Rev. Gelson Gregson states that they were very kindly and hospitably received by the medical officer in charge, "who had a good brew of tea ready, with cheese and biscuits, much more sensible than another medico, who came round with a brandy-bottle as soon as we got in. Every one enjoyed the tea, and did not even call for a peg. I believe," he adds, "that pegs would soon go out of fashion if teapots were only oftener introduced." Tea, unfortunately, requires some trouble to make; but doubtless this difficulty is in a fair way of being removed by the pressure from without. Total abstinence is increasing greatly both in the army and navy.

Miss Weston, whose labours amongst the blue jackets are well known, claims that one man out of every six is a teetotaler ; and the *Hong-Kong Telegraph* recently gave an account of a tea-meeting held with the men of H.M.S. *Orontes* and their successors in the port, at which between 300 and 400 sat down in the Temperance Hall. Mr. James Francis, Organizing Agent of the Royal Naval Temperance Society, having asked Admiral Willes to say a few words, his Excellency advanced to the top of the room and said, "Soldiers, sailors, and marines, I am going to ask you to drink the health, in a flowing bowl of tea, of her Gracious Majesty, the Queen, and in so doing I take the opportunity of bidding the marines and sailors going home on the 20th farewell. I wish them a pleasant passage and a happy meeting with their friends. I invite those lately come out to support by example those who are going away. I consider this an excellent institution. Drunkenness is the cause of nearly all the crimes in the navy, and I dare say also in the army. I ask you to drink the health of the Queen, and

give her Majesty three cheers." The toast was duly drunk in sparkling Bohea, three rounds of cheers being given for her Majesty and "one more" for the gallant admiral. Mr. Haly, R.N., then proposed "The health of his Excellency, the Governor," the toast receiving like treatment. Mr. Chisham, R.N., next proposed "The health of Miss Agnes Weston," and said that no words of his could make her dearer than she already was to the British sailor. The toast was duly honoured, as was also that of Mr. Francis.

The use of tea among cricketers, scullers, pedestrians, cyclists, and others is also becoming more general; for instance, Mr. Wynter Blyth, Medical Officer of Health for Marylebone, says, "I have studied the diets recorded as in use, and find that those who have done long journeys successfully have used that class of diet which science has shown most suitable for muscular exertion—viz. one of a highly nitrogenized character: plenty of meat, eggs, and milk, with bread, but not much butter, and no alcohol. I have cycled for over fifty miles, taking frequent draughts of beer, and in these circumstances,

although there has been no alcoholic effect, it has caused great physical depression. The experience of others is the same. However much it may stimulate for a little while, a



PRESSING THE TEA-LEAVES.

period of well-marked depression follows. I attribute this in part to the salts of potash which some beers contain, in part to injurious bitters, and in part to the alcohol. My own experience as to the best drink when on the



road is most decidedly in favour of tea. Tea appears to rouse both the nervous and muscular system, with, so far as I can discover, no after-depressing effect."

The use of alcohol is almost invariably condemned in the various handbooks on training; but the use of tea is always commended. Mr. C. J. Michôd, late Hon. Sec. of the London Athletic Club, in his "Guide to Athletic Training," considers tea preferable for training purposes, as it possesses less heating properties, and is more digestible. The greatest pedestrian of our time, Mr. Edward Payson Weston, finds in tea and rest the most effective restoratives. Lately he walked 5000 miles in 100 days, and after each day's work, lectured on "*Tea versus Beer.*" Even the publicans on the roads, he says, used to meet him with cups of tea and basins of milk. A Norwich physician, Dr. Beverley, testified to the value of tea in mountain-climbing. "The hardest physical work I have done," he says, "has been mountain-climbing in Switzerland, and on such occasions after a breakfast, of which coffee and milk and bread

formed the chief articles of food, it was my custom to fill my flask with an infusion of cold tea, made over-night from a stock kept for the purpose in my knapsack, and this I invariably found to be the most refreshing drink for such purposes. This is confirmed by all experienced in Alpine ascents, who know only too well that the man who has recourse to his flask of brandy or sherry seldom gains the mountain-top."

In the harvest-field, also, tea is being substituted for beer. At a conference of the members of the Newbury Chamber of Agriculture, held in July, 1878, Mr. T. Bland Garland maintained that nothing can be more unsuitable as a thirst-quenching beverage during hard work in hot weather than beer, and stated that in 1871 he determined to supply no more beer to his labourers under any circumstances. He had agreed as an alternative, to pay the men 18s. instead of 14s., and the women 9s. instead of 7s.; but reflecting that the people would probably find it impossible to supply themselves with a suitable substitute for the beer, and would, in a measure, be driven to the public-house, he deter-

mined to supply them with tea. He thus describes his method of brewing tea,—

“I purchased a common flat-bottomed  $8\frac{1}{2}$ -gallon iron boiler, with a lid, long spout, and tap; this is taken in a cart to the field, with a few bricks to form a temporary fireplace, a few sticks for the fire, some tea in 7-oz. packets, and sugar in 4-lb. packets. The first thing in the morning a woman lights the fire, boils the water, the bailiff puts on the 7 ozs. of tea in a small bag, to boil for ten to fifteen minutes, then removes it and puts in 4 lbs. of sugar; if skim milk can be spared, two to four quarts are added, but this is not a necessity, although desirable. All the labourers are then at liberty to take as much as they like at all times of the day, beginning at breakfast-time, and ending when they leave off work at night. If the field is large, they send large cans to the boiler for it; so soon as the quantity in the boiler is reduced to two gallons, it is drawn off in a pail for consumption, whilst another boilerful is being prepared. The knowledge that they have at their disposal as much good tea as they choose to drink during every minute of the day materially lessens their thirst.

The cost of tea in my case is as follows:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
7 ozs. of tea . . . . .	1	0
4 lbs. of sugar . . . . .	1	2
Skim milk about . . . . .	0	2
	<hr/>	
	2	4

or  $8\frac{1}{2}$  gallons of tea, at  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  per gallon.

I had twenty-eight men and women employed in hay-making this year, and the consumption was,—

		Gals.
Generally,	2 boilers full per day	17
Occasionally,	2½ „ „	21½
On one day,	3 „ „	25½

My calculation is, that they drink on the average two-thirds of a gallon each per day, at a cost of 2*d.* Thus I pay them, in lieu of beer, 8*d.* per day in money, and 2*d.* in tea, or 10*d.* in all. But if the change involved a much larger expenditure than the cost of the beer, employers would be amply remunerated in the better and larger amount of work done, the better disposition of their labourers, the decrease of pauperism, and the general well-being of the people.”

Mr. Garland, having benefited so much by the substitution of tea for beer, was naturally anxious that other farmers should follow his example, and urged them to “let the additional wages be given to the full value of the beer; let the tea be good, and made with care in the field, not sent out from the house, or there will not be enough; be sure that it is always within the reach of every labourer, without stint. See to this yourself: trust it to no one; beer has many friends. Be firm in carrying out the change, and it will be a source of great satisfaction to you and to your labourers, with very little trouble and at no extra expense.” The late Sir Philip

Rose testified that the men on his farm “ were in better condition at the conclusion of the day, less stupid and sullen, and certainly much better fitted the next morning to resume their labours, than with the old system of beer.” It would be easy to multiply extracts, but enough has been said to prove the benefit of tea over alcohol, whether in marching or fighting, cricketing or sculling, cycling or mowing. We may add that cold tea is considered by many writers on the subject one of the most refreshing and satisfactory summer drinks, provided it be not spoiled by the addition of milk and sugar. It ought to be made early in the day, and left to stand in a stone jar until thoroughly cool, and should then be flavoured, in the Russian fashion, with slices of fresh lemon.



## CHAPTER VI.

## TEA AS A STIMULANT.

Rum-punch and poets—Alcohol as a stimulant—The king of the tea-drinkers—Dr. Johnson's teapot—Jonas Hanway's attack—Eloquence inspired by tea-drinking—A delightful tea-story—An absent-minded poet—George Dyer's breakfast-party—An empty cupboard—Hazlitt a prodigious tea-drinker—Barry Cornwall disgusted with Hazlitt's teetotal principles—Wordsworth's love of sugar in his tea—Testimony of other authors—Tea as a tonic—Tea denounced—Tea at St. Stephen's—Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone, and M. Clemenceau quoted—Hartley Coleridge's poem on tea.

WHEN James Hogg, the "Ettrick Shepherd," visited Keswick, he invited Southey to his inn. The invitation was heartily accepted. Southey stayed half an hour, but showed no disposition to imbibe. "I was," says Hogg, "a grieved as well as an astonished man when I found that he refused all participation

in my beverage of rum-punch. For a poet to refuse his glass was to me a phenomenon, and I confess I doubted in my own mind, and doubt to this day if perfect sobriety and transcendent poetical genius can exist together; in Scotland I am sure they cannot." No doubt; but, since Burns and Hogg have passed away, a new generation has arisen. The poet, the essayist, the historian, and the journalist no longer write under the influence of alcohol. As Mr. George R. Sims says, the idea that drink quickly excites the brain is exploded. Healthier stimulants have taken its place. It cannot be denied that some good work has been done under the influence of tea. Look at Dr. Johnson, for instance. That fine old Tory is worthy of the title of the king of the tea-drinkers. He loved tea quite as much as Porson loved gin. Tea was Johnson's only stimulant. He drank it in bed, he drank it with his friends, and he drank it while compiling his dictionary. One of his friends thus describes his mode of life: "About twelve o'clock I commonly visited him, and frequently found him in bed, or declaiming over his tea, which he drank

very plentifully. He generally had a levee of morning visitors, chiefly men of letters. He declaimed all the morning, then went to dinner at a tavern, where he commonly stayed late, and then drank his tea at some friend's house, over which he loitered a great while, but seldom took supper." At his house in Gough Square, off Fleet Street, he frequently drank tea with his dependants, some of whom were blind, and some were deaf. Boswell has left us a graphic picture of these interesting gatherings :—"We went home to his house to tea. Mrs. Williams made it with sufficient dexterity, notwithstanding her blindness," though he describes her putting her fingers into the cups to feel if they were full; but then it was Johnson's favourite beverage, and he adds, "I willingly drank cup after cup, as if it had been the Heliconian Spring. There was a pretty large circle there, and the great doctor was in very good humour, lively and ready to talk upon all sorts of subjects." Mr. F. Sherlock, a fertile writer on the temperance question, claims Dr. Johnson as a teetotaler, and has placed him in his gallery of "Illustrious

Abstainers.” If the learned doctor was an abstainer from alcoholic drinks, he made up for his abstinence from wine by indulging to excess in the milder and less dangerous stimulant of tea. If he did not write his dictionary by the aid of the Chinese drink, his teapot was never far away from his writing-table. “I suppose,” said Boswell, “that no person ever enjoyed with more relish the infusion of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank at all hours were so great, that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it; but he assured me he never felt the least inconvenience from it.”

Johnson’s indulgence did not escape the notice of Jonas Hanway, who was so alarmed for the safety of the nation that he wrote an essay on “Tea and its Pernicious Consequences,” pronouncing it the ruin of the nation, and of every one who drank it. Johnson replied to the attack, and described himself as a “hardened and shameless tea-drinker, whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with

tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning." Johnson's defence did not, however, silence his critics. Sir John Hawkins characterized tea-drinking "as unmanly, and, like John Wesley, almost gave it the colour of a crime. The worthy lexicographer, it must be confessed, was a thirsty soul, for his teapot held at least two quarts. But Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton writes of a clergyman whose tea-drinking indulgences exceeded those of Johnson. This self-denying Christian, who "from the most conscientious motives denied himself ale and wine, found a fountain of consolation in the teapot. His usual allowance was sixteen cups, all of heroic strength, and the effect upon his brain seems to have been altogether favourable, for his sermons were both long and eloquent."

Dr. Gordon Stables offered prizes for original anecdotes about this delightful and healthful beverage, but he laments that he obtained none worthy of printer's ink, and has come to the conclusion that tea is not the drink of his beloved country; that, had he offered prizes for anecdotes about whisky-



drinking, "Scotia, my auld, respected mither, would have shown out in a different light." No doubt; Scotland has long been famous for rigid orthodoxy, combined with a love of whisky; but Mr. Stables must have forgotten the delightful tea-story told by Barry Cornwall about George Dyer. Dyer seems to have been as absent-minded as Bowles,<sup>1</sup> the poet.

<sup>1</sup> "Bowles was in the habit of daily riding through a country turnpike-gate, and one day he presented his twopence to the gatekeeper as usual. 'What is that for, sir?' he asked. 'For my horse, of course.' 'But, sir, you have no horse.' 'Dear me!' exclaimed the astonished poet; 'am I walking?' Mrs. Moore also told me that Bowles gave her a Bible as a birthday present. She asked him to write her name in it; he did so, inscribing it to her as a gift—*From the Author*. 'I never,' said he, 'had but one watch, and I lost it the very first day I wore it.' Mrs. Bowles whispered to me, 'And if he got another to-day, he would lose it as quickly.' I met not long ago, near Salisbury, a gentleman farmer who had been one of his parishioners, and cherished an affectionate remembrance of the good parson. He told me one story of him that is worth recording: one day he had a dinner-party; the guests were kept waiting for the host; his wife went upstairs to see by what mischance he was delayed. She found him in a sad 'taking,' hunting everywhere for a silk stocking. After a minute search Mrs. Bowles found that he had

Barry Cornwall says,—

“Poor George Dyer—whom Lamb has celebrated—formed one subject of conversation this evening. He invited some one—I think it was Llanos, the author of ‘Esteban’ and ‘Sandoval’—to breakfast with him one day in Clifford’s Inn. Dyer, of course, forgot all about the matter very speedily after giving the invitation; and when Llanos went at the appointed hour, he found nothing but little Dyer, and his books, and his dust—the work of years—at home. George, however, was anything but inhospitable, as far as his means or ideas went; and on being told that Llanos had come to breakfast, proceeded to investigate his cupboard. He found the remnant of a threepenny loaf, two cups and saucers, a little glazed teapot, and a spoonful of milk. They sat down, and (Dyer putting the hot water into the teapot) commenced breakfast. Llanos attacked the stale crust, which Lazarillo de Tomes himself would have despised, and waited with much good-humour and patience for his tea. At last, out it came. Dyer, who was half blind, kept pouring out—nothing but hot water from the teapot, until Llanos, who thought a man might be guilty of too much abstinence, inquired if Dyer had not forgot *the tea*. ‘God bless me!’ replied Dyer, ‘and so I have.’ He began immediately to remedy his error, and emptied the contents of a piece of brown paper into the teapot, deluged it with water, and sat down with a look of complete

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put *the two stockings on one leg!* Once when his own house was pointed out to him, he could not by any possibility call to mind who lived there.”—Hall, “*Book of Memcries of Great Men and Women of the Age.*”

satisfaction. ‘How very odd it was that I should make such a mistake!’ said Dyer. However, he now determined to make amends, and filled Llanos’ cup again. Llanos thought the tea had a strange colour, but not having dread of *aqua tofana* before his eyes, he thrust his spoon in and tasted. It was *ginger*! Seeing that it was in vain to expect commonplaces from the little absentee, Llanos continued cutting and crumbling a little bread into his plate for a short time, and then departed. He went straight to a coffee-house in the neighbourhood, and was just finishing a capital breakfast when Dyer came in, to read the paper, or to inquire after some one who frequented the coffee-house. He recognized Llanos, and asked him how he did; but felt no surprise at seeing him devouring a second breakfast. He had totally forgotten all the occurrences of the morning

Hazlitt, like Dr. Johnson, was a prodigious tea-drinker, and his peculiar habits and manners were minutely photographed by his friends. His failings were, no doubt, greatly exaggerated, but we believe ourselves on safe ground in quoting Patmore’s account of his friend’s devotion to the teapot:—

“Hazlitt usually rose at from one to two o’clock in the day—scarcely ever before twelve; and if he had no work in hand, he would sit over his breakfast (of excessively strong black tea, and a toasted French roll) till four or five in the afternoon—silent, motionless, and self-absorbed, as a Turk over his opium-pouch; for tea served him precisely in this capacity. It was the only stimulant he

ever took, and at the same time the only luxury ; the delicate state of his digestive organs prevented him from tasting any fermented liquors. He never touched any but *black* tea, and was very particular about the quality of that, always using the most expensive that could be got ; and he used, when living alone, to consume nearly a pound in a week. A cup of Hazlitt's tea (if you happened to come in for the first brewage of it) was a peculiar thing ; I have never tasted anything like it. He always made it himself, half filling the teapot with tea, pouring the boiling water on it, and then almost immediately pouring it out, using with it a great quantity of sugar and cream. To judge from its occasional effect upon myself, I should say that the quantity Hazlitt drank of this tea produced ultimately a most injurious effect upon him, and in all probability hastened his death, which took place from disease of the digestive organs. But its *immediate* effect was agreeable, even to a degree of fascination ; and not feeling any subsequent reaction from it, he persevered in its use to the last, notwithstanding two or three attacks, similar to that which terminated his life."

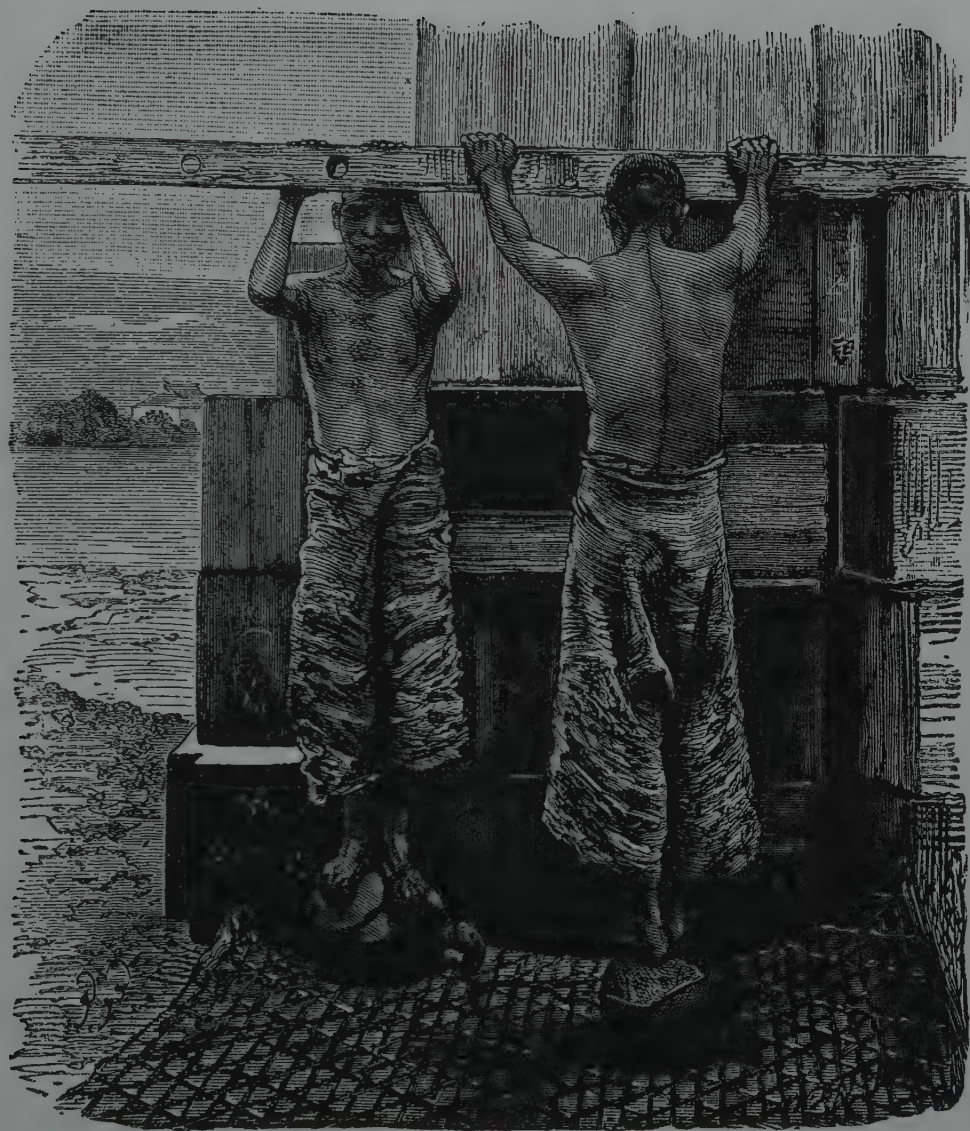
From Barry Cornwall, also, we have similar testimony concerning Hazlitt's indulgence. Proctor was as much disgusted with Hazlitt's spare diet as Llanos was with Dyer's, and wrote,—

"I saw a great deal of Hazlitt during the last twelve or thirteen years of his stormy, anxious, uncomfortable life. In 1819 he resided in a small house in York Street, Westminster, where I visited him, and where Milton had formerly dwelt ; afterwards he moved from lodging to

lodging, and finally went to live at No. 6, Frith Street, Soho, where he fell ill and died. I went to visit him very often during his late *breakfasts* (when he drank tea of an astounding strength), not unfrequently also at the Fives Court, and at other persons' houses; and once I dined with him. This (an unparalleled occurrence) was in York Street, when some friend had sent him a couple of Dorking fowls, of which he suddenly invited me to partake. I went, expecting the usual sort of dinner; but it was limited solely to the fowls and bread. He drank nothing but water, and there was nothing but water to drink. He offered to send for some porter for me, but, being out of health at the time, I declined, and escaped soon after dinner to a coffee-house, where I strengthened myself with a few glasses of wine."

Proctor would have fared little better had he visited the Lake poets; for, according to Miss Mitford, "the Wordsworths have no regular meals, but go to the cupboard when hungry, and eat what they want." Wordsworth, by the way, appears to have liked his tea well sweetened; for, when he visited Charles Lamb, at his lodgings in Enfield, *one* of the extra "teas" in the week's bill was charged sixpence. On Lamb's inquiry what this meant, the reply was, that "the elderly gentleman"—meaning Wordsworth—"had taken such a quantity of sugar in his tea." Proctor, on the other hand, seems to have





PRESSING BAGS OF TEA.



had a deep-rooted antipathy to tea, and to have found a wife who shared his feelings. Writing to his "lady-love," he said, "Will your friend give me some blanc-mange? but no, I don't like blanc-mange. I hate nothing but *green tea*, and my enemies, and insincerity, and affectation, and undue pretence. It is partly, I believe, because you have none of these that I love you so much." No; he liked something stronger than tea, and wrote of "brains made clear by the irresistible strength of beer." But some of the sweetest poems, the brightest novels, and the finest essays have been written without the aid of either wine or beer. Shelley's beverage, for instance, consisted of copious and frequent draughts of cold water, but tea was always grateful. Bulwer Lytton's breakfast consisted of dry toast and a cup of cold tea, or hot tea impatiently tossed into a tumbler half full of cold water. De Quincey said that he usually drank tea from eight o'clock at night to four in the morning. Kant's breakfast consisted of a cup of tea and a pipe of tobacco, and on these he worked eight hours. Motley, the historian, usually rose before

seven, and, with the aid of a cup of tea or coffee, wrote until the family breakfast-hour. That revolutionary poet, Victor Hugo, drinks tea, but fortifies it with a drop of rum.

More than three hours a day at the work of literary production is generally considered destructive; but a case is known to the author in which a well-known writer has been engaged in literary composition from seven to ten hours a day for at least ten years. The work he has accomplished in every department of literature during this period is truly astonishing: and its quality is admittedly high. Yet his only stimulant is tea. He is practically a life abstainer, and has never used tobacco. After a spell of work extending over three hours, a cup of tea and a break of half an hour have enabled him to resume his work and to continue writing far into the night. Tea is becoming the favourite stimulant of brain-workers; and although De Quincey drank laudanum for some time, he was enthusiastic in his praise of tea. He said,—

“For tea, though ridiculed by those who are naturally

coarse in their nervous sensibilities, or are become so from wine-drinking, and are not susceptible of influence from so refined a stimulant, will always be a favourite beverage of the intellectual ; and, for my part, I would have joined Dr. Johnson in a *bellum internecinum* against Jonas Hanway, or any other impious person who should have presumed to disparage it. But here, to save myself the trouble of too much verbal description, I will introduce a painter, and give him directions for the rest of the picture. . . . Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high, . . . and near the fire paint me a tea-table ; and (as it is clear that no creature can come to see one on such a stormy night), place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray ; and if you know how to paint such a thing, symbolically or otherwise, paint me an eternal teapot—eternal *à parte ante* and *à parte post* ; for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four in the morning. And as it is very unpleasant to make tea, or to pour it out for oneself, paint me a lovely young woman sitting at the table."

But even a "lovely young woman" would have failed to satisfy the tastes of the historian Buckle, who was a most fastidious tea-drinker. "No woman," he declared, "could make tea until he had taught her." The great thing, he believed, was to have the cups and even the spoons warmed. Commenting upon the confession of William Cullen Bryant, that he never took coffee or tea, William Howitt said,—“I regularly take both, find the



greatest refreshment in both, and never experienced any deleterious effects from either, except in one instance, when by mistake I took a cup of tea strong enough for ten men. On the contrary, tea is to me a wonderful refresher and reviver. After long-continued exertion, as in the great pedestrian journeys that I formerly made, tea would always, in a manner almost miraculous, banish all my fatigue and diffuse through my whole frame comfort and exhilaration, without any subsequent evil effect. I am quite well aware that this is not the experience of many others—my wife among the number—on whose nervous system tea acts mischievously, producing inordinate wakefulness, and, its continuous use, indigestion. Yet,” he wisely adds, “this is one of the things that people should learn and act upon, namely, to take such things as suit them, and avoid such as do not.” This is, as a rule, the safest course to pursue, and it is adopted by all sensible persons.

To that brilliant historian, Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., tea is not only the most useful stimulant, but the best defence against headache. “I have,” he writes, “always

been a liberal drinker of tea. I have found it of immense benefit in keeping off headache, my only malady. Probably tea-drinking, even if not immoderate, does some hurt to the nerves; but I have never been able to satisfy myself that this is so in my case. Certainly, few men have worked harder and suffered less from ill-health than myself." Another famous man of letters testifies to the value of tea: "The only sure brain-stimulants with me," writes Professor Dowden, "are plenty of fresh air and tea; but each of these in large quantities produces a kind of intoxication; the intoxication of a great amount of air causing wakefulness, with a delightful confusion of spirits, without the capacity of steady thought; tea intoxication unsettles and enfeebles my will; but then a great dose of tea often does get good work out of me (though I may pay for it afterwards), while alcohol renders all mental work impossible." "Tea is my favourite tonic when I am tired or languid," confesses Mr. George R. Sims, "and always has a stimulating effect." And the Rev. John Clifford, an able and scholarly

Baptist minister, testifies that tea has enabled him to accomplish some very hard work. He says,—

“For at least a quarter of a century I have attempted to solve the problem how to get the maximum of power out of a somewhat feeble body, and retain the maximum of health ; but having been a total abstainer for nearly twenty-eight years, I have no experience of the relation of alcoholics and narcotics to the solution of the problem. In preparing for a succession of examinations (B.A., M.A., LL.D., and B.Sc.) at the London University, whilst I had to discharge the duties of a London pastorate, I drank tea somewhat copiously, on an average thrice a day. I worked twelve and sometimes fourteen hours a day over extended periods, preached regularly to the same congregation thrice a week, directed the affairs of an aggressive church, conducted several classes for young men, and at the same time matriculated in the First Class, took a First Class B.A., was bracketed first at the M.A., took honours at the LL.B. and at the B.Sc. in three subjects ; and I found that on tea I could work longer, with a clearer head, and with more sustained intensity, than on any other beverage. But I am convinced that good as tea-drinking is for prolonged mental strain, it was very prejudicial to me, and has permanently lowered the digestive force. Raisins (as suggested by Sir W. Gull) and grapes I have found in more recent years a most convenient and effective method of reinforcing mental strength whilst at work ; but the wisest course is to keep as robust health as possible, by horse exercise, or daily walks in the early morning, and before retiring to rest, by the use of dumb-bells and the gymnastic bat.”

Harriet Martineau strongly condemned the use of alcohol by brain-workers, and said that her stimulants were fresh air and cold water ; but this remarkable old maid dearly loved a cup of tea. Maclise sketched her sitting by the fireside, her feet on the fender, steadying with one hand a pan on the fire, teapot, cup and saucer and milk-jug on the table by her side, and her cat nestling on her shoulder. Miss Ellen Terry also finds tea the best stimulant. In reply to the question, "What do you drink ?" put to her by a Chicago reporter, she stated that her favourite beverage was tea. She takes tea after every meal, and also the first thing in the morning.

Professor Everett, of Belfast, on the other hand, says that he has frequently suffered more from nervous excitability due to tea or coffee, than from any other kind of stimulant. Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton, the artist, confesses that at one time he did himself harm by drinking tea, but has given up coffee as well as tea. The Rev. Henry Solly, who has laboured for many years among working-men, has abstained from tea and coffee during the last fifteen years, as they caused

nervous excitement, prostration, sleeplessness, and great inequality of spirits. He hardly likes, however, denouncing the use of tea, as it seems to him the only refuge (except coffee, which to some constitutions is more injurious) for those persons who, though of a nervous and excitable temperament, cannot persuade themselves to give up all stimulants, and yet desire to discountenance the use of alcohol. But he is quite sure that it causes or promotes many nervous diseases, particularly neuralgia, and not seldom leads to that "sinking" and depression which is so frequent a cause of resort being had to "nips" in the shape of glasses of wine or spirits.

Mr. Solly is not alone in his unwillingness to denounce the use of tea, because, whatever may be said against tea-drinking, its objectors cannot but admit that it is the least harmful of stimulants.<sup>2</sup> What is there to take its

<sup>2</sup> "With reference to the tea-drinking, of course there was such a thing as excess and indigestion—but nobody ever heard of a man kicking his wife to death because he had drunk tea; and no wife ever complained of her home being made unhappy through her husband drinking tea. There was not a judge on the bench who had not



place? "Once," remarks Dr. Inman, of Liverpool, "I was an unbeliever in tea, and during the many days of solitary misery which I had to endure in consequence of the delicacy of children and their absence with mamma at the seaside, I tried to do without it. Hot water and cold, milk and cream, soda water and brandy, water and nothing at all, were tried in succession to sweep those cobwebs from the brain, which a dinner and a consequent snooze left behind them. It was all in vain—I was good for nothing, and the evenings intended to be devoted to work were passed in smoking, gossip, or novel-reading. I took to tea, and all was changed; and now I fully believe that a good dinner, 'forty winks,' and a cup of strong tea afterwards will enable a man to 'get through' no end of work, especially of a mental kind."

Replying to the argument that as the lower animals do without tea and coffee, so

borne witness to the fact that drunkenness was an incentive to crime. When the judges began to admit that tea-drinking was increasing the criminal statistics of the country, then Mr. Ford could come forward with his amusing statement."—*Rev. Dr. Chadwick*, speech at the Diocesan Synod at Armagh, October 24, 1883.

ought we, Dr. Poore emphasizes the fact that we are *not* lower animals; that we have *minds*, as well as *bodies*; and that since these substances have the property in common of enabling us to forget our worries and fatigues, to make light of misfortunes, and generally to bear "the stings and arrows of outrageous fortune," let us accept them, make rational use of them, and be thankful. The super-dietetic-purists, who caution us against "those poisonous liquids, milk, water, and tea," have furnished Mr. George R. Sims with a congenial topic for his facile pen. From "The Drinker's Dirge" we quote the following lines:—

"In trying from all things our lips to debar,  
Hasn't Science just gallop'd his hobby too far?  
Let the nervous go thirsting, they shan't frighten me  
With this nonsense concerning milk, water, and tea."

Turning from literature to politics, we find that Lord Palmerston resorted to tea to refresh him during the midnight hours he spent at St. Stephen's. Mr. Gladstone confessed a short time ago at Cannes, that he drank more tea between midnight and four in the morning than any other member of

the House of Commons ; and strange to say, the strongest tea, although taken immediately before going to bed, never interferes with his sleep. M. Clemenceau, the leader of the French Radicals, is also reported to have owned himself an intemperate bibber of tea. Both wondered how, before tea was imported into Europe, our forefathers got on without it.<sup>3</sup> It was remarked that manners had become more polite and nations more humane since the introduction of the Chinese beverage, on hearing which Mr. Gladstone exclaimed, "Oh ! there were great and admirable characters in the Middle Ages."

Although Sir Charles Dilke grows wine, he never drinks it, finding in tea a better stimulant. At one time Cobden was an

<sup>3</sup> "As tea did not come into England until 1610, and coffee until 1652, beer or wine was taken at all meals. The queen would only take beer regularly. Her maids of honour breakfasted, or rather dined, off meat and beer. Single and double beers were on all tables. In the year 1570 the scholars of Trinity College, Cambridge, consumed 2250 barrels of beer, as appears from the State Papers of the time. Two tuns of wine a month were accredited to the suite of Mary Queen of Scots during her confinement in England."—"The England of Shakespeare," by E. Goadby.

abstainer from intoxicating drinks, which he declared useless for sustaining strength; "for the more work I have had to do, the more I have resorted to the pump and the teapot." The hero of the Anti-Corn-Law League felt more at home drinking tea than dining with great people. The formalities of dinner parties were extremely irksome to him. "I have been obliged," he says, "to mount a white cravat at these dinner-parties much against my will, but I found a black stock was quite out of character." In another letter he writes, "I assure you I would rather find myself taking tea with you than dining with lords and ladies." But as the leader of a great movement, he found it necessary to sacrifice personal tastes and to endure the afflictions of dinner-parties, for the sake of securing the support of the aristocracy.

Turning to the literature of the subject, it is interesting to learn that Hartley Coleridge was in his youth fond of tea. In *Blackwood's Magazine* (vol. 55, 1857) appears "An Unpublished Poem," by Hartley Coleridge, with the following note by the editor: "This early production of the late Hartley

Coleridge may not be without interest, as it describes a state of social manners which is already passing away, in a style of composition which belongs in some measure to the past." The poem commences thus :—

“ Though all unknown to Greek and Roman song,  
The paler Hyson and the dark Souchong,  
Though black, not green, the warbled praises share  
Of knightly troubadour or gay *trouvère*.  
Yet deem not thou, an alien quite to numbers,  
That friend to prattle, and that foe to slumbers,  
Which Kian-Long, imperial poet praised  
So high that cent. per cent. its price was raised ;  
Which Pope himself would sometimes condescend  
To plead commodious at a couplet's end ;  
Which the sweet bard of Olney did not spurn,  
Who loved the music of the ‘ hissing urn,’  
Let her who bade me write, exact the Muse,  
Inspire my genius and my tea infuse,  
So shall my verse the hovering sylphs delight,  
And critic gnomes relinquish half their spite,  
Clear, warm and flowing as my liquid theme,  
As sweet as sugar and as smooth as cream.”

Happy would it have been for the young poet if he had remained a tea-drinker, and had never known the taste of alcohol.

But Cowper is the poet of the tea-table. He it is whom the amateur reporters love to quote, or, rather, misquote, when they de-



scribe the friends at a tea-party, "partaking of the cup that cheers, but not inebriates." What the poet really said is found in Book the Fourth of the "Task."

"Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,  
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,  
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn  
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups  
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,  
So let us welcome peaceful evening in."

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FRIENDS AND THE FOES OF TEA.

A learned Dutchman's opinion of tea—Two hundred cups a day recommended—Tea the universal panacea—Tea-merchants greedy as hell—Degeneracy of the race through tea-drinking—Appeal to women—Tea a slow poison—Experiment upon a dog—John Wesley's attack upon tea—Why he preached against it—Dr. Lettsom's thesis—Accuses tea of leading to intemperance—The essential principle of tea—The value of experiments upon animals—Tea-drinking among women—The Anti-Teapot Society—The benefits of tea-drinking—Dr. Richardson's condemnation—The Dean of Bangor as a joker—Life without stimulants—Dr. Poore's description of the good and bad effects of tea-drinking—Injurious to children—A properly controlled appetite the safest guide.

LIKE tobacco, tea received on its introduction very different treatment by different people. It was extravagantly praised by some, and extravagantly denounced by others. "Some

ascribe such sovereign virtues to this exotic," remarks one author, "as if 'twas able to eradicate or prevent the spring of all diseases. . . . Others, on the contrary, are equally severe in their censures, and impute the most pernicious consequences to it, accounting it no better than a slow but efficacious poison, and a seminary of diseases." A learned Dutchman pronounced it the infallible cure for bad health, and declared that "if mankind could be induced to drink a sufficient quantity of it, the innumerable ills to which man is subject would not only be diminished, but entirely unknown." He went so far as to express his conviction that 200 cups daily would not be too much. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, to find the Dutch East India Company liberally rewarding this eloquent apostle of the new drink. Scarcely less enthusiastic was the professor of physic in a German University, who declared tea "the defence against the enemies of health; the universal panacea <sup>*Cure all*</sup> which has long been sought for." This opinion, indeed, prevailed very extensively in the East. The following notice is copied from the

“Relation of the Voyage to Siam by Six Jesuits, in 1685 :”—“It is a civility amongst them to present betel and tea to all that visit them. Their own country supplies them with betel and areca, but they have their tea from China and Japan. All the Orientals have a particular esteem for it, because of the great virtues they find to be in it. Their physicians say that it is a sovereign medicine against the stone and pains of the head, that it allays vapours, that it cheers the mind, and strengthens the stomach. In all kinds of fevers they take it stronger than commonly, when they begin to feel the heat of the fit, and then the patient covers himself up to sweat, and it hath been very often found that this sweat wholly drives away the fever.” A similar belief in the virtues of opium existed until very recently in the minds of the people of the Fen counties.

The enemies of tea appear to have been quite as active as its friends. A German physician declared it a cause of dropsy and diabetes, and the introducer of foreign diseases, and he charged the merchants with

“inexpressible frauds, calling them greedy as hell, the vilest of usurers, who lie in wait for men’s purses and lives.” According to Mr. Mattieu Williams, drunkenness serves one useful purpose; for it helps to get rid of the surplus population. A French phy-



DRYING THE TEA-LEAVES.

sician held similar views of the use of tea and coffee; for, writing at the close of the seventeenth century, he expressed his belief, “that they are permitted by God’s providence for the lessening the number of mankind by shortening life, as a kind of silent plague.” Coming down to more recent times, the



most remarkable production against tea appeared in 1722. The mind of the author seems to have been seriously disturbed at the prospect of the deterioration of the race, which would inevitably follow indulgence in tea. His treatise, which is addressed to ladies, is entitled “An Essay on the Nature, Use, and Abuse of Tea, in a Letter to a Lady; with an Account of its Mechanical Operation. London: printed by J. Bettenham for James Lacy at the Ship, between the Two Temple Gates, Fleet Street, 1722. Price 1s.” This book contains some curious information about the diseases liable to follow the use of tea. The author begins:—

“Madam,—an earnest desire, which all ages have shown, to serve your sex will, I hope, be sufficient warrant for my troubling you with these papers. To be assisting towards the preservation of that form and beauty with which God has adorned you, is certainly a work not less pious than pleasant; for while we indulge ourselves in our greatest pleasure (which is to serve your sex), would also show our love and gratitude to the Almighty Being, whose form you so nearly represent, and to whom we are so much indebted for the blessing we received when He gave man so agreeable an helpmate. Though the value which we ought to set on this blessing is a sufficient motive to us to endeavour by all means to dissuade you from anything which may be to your detriment, yet there

are other motives which oblige us to have a more particular regard to the health of your sex. For when by any means you ignore your constitutions and impair your healths, though you yourselves suffer too severely for it, yet the tragedy does not end here, for the calamity is entailed on succeeding ages, perhaps to the third and fourth generations."

The author then notes the fact that Lycurgus thought the Spartan women not in the least unworthy of his care and direction, and proceeds to remark:—

"If this lawgiver lived in these our days, what a mean opinion, what a little hope, would he have of the next age, when the women of this age fell so very short of that regularity and healthy way of living, which he looked on as necessary for the preservation of a state! With what an uneasiness would he have seen the many errors which we daily commit!—errors which are introduced by luxury, suffered through ignorance, and supported by being fashionable. He would soon have condemned the exorbitant use of tea, and upon the first observing its ill effects would certainly have prohibited the importation of it. But the present age has other considerations: tea pays too great a duty, and supports too many coaches, not to be preferred to the health of the public. Tea has too great interest to be prohibited, and I wish reason itself may be sufficient to dissuade the world from the use of it. I must confess I have so little hope from these papers, that though (to me and some others, who have had the perusal of them) they seem just and satisfactory, yet I should never have presented them to the public, had not I thought it an

indispensable duty to acquaint the world with the many disorders which may possibly arise from its too frequent use."

This worthy benefactor of his species contends that tea is a slow but sure poison, and that it is "not less destructive to the animal economy than opium, or some other drugs which we have at present learned to avoid with more caution." He does not deny that tea is "useful as physic," but lays down the following propositions, which he endeavours to prove. First, that tea may attenuate the blood to any degree necessary to the production of any disease, which may arise from too thin a state of the blood. Secondly, that tea may depauper the blood, or waste the spirits, to any degree necessary to produce any disease, which may arise from too poor a blood. Third, that tea may bring on any degree whatsoever of a plethora necessary to the production of any disease, which may arise from a plethoric state of body. From an experiment upon a dog the author concludes that "tea abounds with a lixivate salt, by whose assistance it attenuates the blood." The author draws some terrible

pictures of the evils of tea-drinking, but does not presume to dictate how his readers should act. “Whether or not we ought to abandon the use of what may possibly be of so vast injury to us, I leave to every reasonable man to judge, having myself done the duty of a man and Christian in warning them of what dangers they may fall into.”

On the other hand, Thomas Frost, M.D., wrote a “Discourse on Tea, with Plain and Useful Rules for Gouty People,” in 1750. In this he contended that,—

“A moderate use of tea of a due strength seems better adapted to the fair sex than men, for they, naturally being of a more lax and delicate make, are more liable to a fulness of blood and juices; as also because they have less exercise or head-labours, than which nothing braces better, or gives the fibres a greater springiness; and because they are less accustomed to drink wine, whose astringency corrugates the fibres, and enables the vessels to act with greater briskness and force, so in some measure answers the end of the labour.”

He holds that tea in a dietetic point of view seems in general not only harmless, but very useful, but considers it impossible to say “beforehand with what healthy persons tea will disagree, till they have used it;

where it disagrees, it should immediately be left off, for there is no altering or compelling a constitution. However, where it agrees, it excels all other vegetables, foreign or domestic, for preventing sleepiness, drowsiness, or dulness, and taking off weariness or fatigue, raising the spirits safely, corroborating the memory, strengthening the judgment, quickening the invention, &c. ; but then it should be drank moderately, and in the afternoon chiefly, and not made too habitual."

John Wesley, a few years later, attacked the use of tea. In 1748 he published a small tract, "Letter to a Friend concerning Tea," in which he accused tea of impairing digestion, unstringing the nerves, involving great and useless expense, and in his own case, and that of others, inducing symptoms of paralysis. But, in the first instance, he preached against tea, not because he thought it injurious, but because he wanted money. The whole of the London Methodists were at that time very poor. The Rev. L. Tyerman, in his "Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley," says,—

"The number of members in the London Society on the 12th of April, 1746, was 1939, and the amount of



their quarterly contributions 113*l.* 9*s.*, upon an average fourteenpence per member. Considering the high price of money, and that nearly the whole of the London Methodists were extremely poor, the amount subscribed was highly creditable. Wesley also believed its use to be injurious. He tells us that when he first went to Oxford, with an exceedingly good constitution, and being otherwise in health, he was somewhat surprised at certain symptoms of a paralytic disorder. His hand shook, especially after breakfast; but he soon observed that if for two or three days he intermitted drinking tea, the shaking ceased. Upon inquiry, he found tea had the same effect upon others, and particularly on persons whose nerves were weak. This led him to lessen the quantity he took, and to drink it weaker; but still for above six and twenty years he was more or less subject to the same disorder. In July, 1746, he began to observe that abundance of the people of London were similarly affected; some of them having their nerves unstrung, and their bodily strength decayed. He asked them if they were hard drinkers; they replied, 'No, indeed, we drink scarce anything but a little tea morning and night!' . . . Having set the example (of abstinence from tea) Wesley recommended the same abstinence to a few of his preachers; and a week later to above a hundred of his people, whom he believed to be strong in faith, all of whom, with two or three exceptions, resolved by the grace of God to make the trial without delay. In a short time he proposed it to the whole society. Objections rose in abundance. Some said, 'Tea is not unwholesome at all.' To these he replied that many eminent physicians had declared it was, and that, if frequently used by those of weak nerves, it is no other than a slow poison. Others said, 'Tea is not unwhole-

some to me; why then should I leave it off?' Wesley answered, 'To give an example to those to whom it is undeniably prejudicial, and to have the more wherewith to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked.' Others said, 'It helps my health, nothing else will agree with me.' To such Wesley's caustic reply was, 'I suppose your body is much of the same kind with that of your grandmother, and do you think nothing else agreed with her, or with any of her progenitors? What poor, puling, sickly things must all the English then have been till within these hundred years! Besides, if, in fact, nothing else will agree with you—if tea has already weakened your stomach, and impaired your digestion to such a degree, it has hurt you more than you are aware. You have need to abhor it as deadly poison, and to renounce it from this very hour.' What was the result of Wesley's attempt to form a *tea*-total society? We can hardly tell, except that he himself abstained from tea for the next twelve years, until Dr. Fothergill ordered him to resume its use. Charles Wesley began to abstain, but how long his abstinence lasted we are not informed. About 100 of the London Methodists followed the example of their leader; and, besides these, a large number of others began to be *temperate* and to use less than they had previously."

"This was, to say the least," adds Mr. Tyerman, "an amusing episode in Wesley's laborious life. All must give him credit for the best and most benevolent intentions, and it is right to add that, ten days after his proposal was submitted to the London Society,

he had collected among his friends thirty pounds for a lending stock, and that this was soon made up to fifty, by means of which, before the year was ended, above 250 destitute persons had received acceptable relief."

The most noteworthy opponent after Wesley was Jonas Hanway, who, in 1756, wrote a bulky volume under the title of "A Journal of Eight Days' Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston-upon-Thames, to which is added an Essay on Tea, considered as Pernicious to Health, obstructing Industry, and impoverishing the Nation." The effects of tea-drinking formed the subject of Dr. Lett-som's inaugural thesis, when he sought the medical doctorate of the University of Leyden in 1767. He accused tea of inducing "excess in spirituous liquors, by reason of the weakness and debility of the system brought on by the daily habit of drinking tea, seeking a temporary relief in some cordial; of producing in some excruciating pains about the stomach, involuntary trembling and fluttering of the nerves, destruction of half your teeth at the age of twenty, without any hopes

of getting new ones, depression, loss of memory, tremblings and symptoms of paralysis; and of bringing on a gradual debility and impoverished condition of the entire system."

Tea contains an active principle called *theine*, which, according to Dr. Sinclair, was discovered so recently as 1827. Adopting one of the methods of the opponents of tobacco, the enemies of tea conclude it to be a deadly poison from its effect upon animals. A New York dentist is reported to have boiled down a pound of young Hyson tea from a quart to half a pint, ten drops of which killed a rabbit three months old; and when boiled down to one gill, eight drops killed a cat of the same age in a few minutes. "Think of it!" exclaims an opponent of tea, "most persons who drink tea use not less than a pound in three months, and yet a pound of Hyson tea contains poison enough to kill, according to the above experiment, more than 17,000 rabbits, or nearly 200 a day! and if boiled down to a gill, it contains poison enough to kill 10,860 cats in the same space of time! How can any one in his

senses believe that any human being can take poison enough into the stomach in one day to kill 185 rabbits and not suffer from it?—or that the uses of this poison can be continued from day to day without injury to health and life?<sup>1</sup>

The Americans appear the most energetic in their opposition to tea. An organization called the “American Health and Temperance Association” was formed in 1879 against tobacco, tea, and coffee; and, according to one of its publications, has a membership of more than 10,000. It believes that more harm is done at the present time by tobacco, tea, and coffee, than by all forms of alcoholic drinks combined, and “the teetotal pledge of the association requires abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, tea, coffee, opium, and all other narcotics and stimulants.” The “Good Health Publishing Company,” at Battle Creek, also issues tracts on the “Evil Effects of the Use of Tea and

<sup>1</sup> “It is not safe, in regard to the action of a drug on animals, to conclude that its effect will be the same on men. For instance, belladonna, which is a deadly poison for men, does not hurt rabbits.”—*Professor Rolleston.*



Coffee," in which it is contended that these beverages waste vital force, and injure digestion and the nervous system; and that they irritate the temper, and encourage gossip and scandal.<sup>2</sup>

A New York magazine, the *Herald of Health*, is equally unsparing in its attacks on tea-drinking:—"The habit of tea-drinking among women is one of the worst with which the hygienic physician has to contend. Very few women, comparatively, among civilized peoples are free from this vice—for vice it is—and as pronounced in its effects as either whisky or tobacco. . . . It is a common custom among women who do hard manual labour to depend upon their cup of tea, when they are tired, to rest them, as they say, and thus the wearied nerves are

<sup>2</sup> There may be some truth in this statement. "I do not remember any mention of tea in Wycherley, but in Congreve's 'Double Dealer' (Act 1, Scene 1, p. 175 a), the scene is laid at Lord Touchwood's house; and when Careless inquires what has become of the ladies, just after dinner, Mellefont replies, "Why, they are at the end of the gallery, retired to tea and scandal, according to their ancient custom."—*Buckle, Common-Place Book.*

lulled to sleep and the warning voice of nature hushed, that the work may be done and the system taxed to the utmost that it is able to bear without complete exhaustion. Is it any wonder that women once broken down are so hard to restore to health again?

“On women and children its worst consequences fall. To the use of tea may be traced directly most of the prostrating nervous headaches with which so many women are afflicted; also most of the neuralgic and nervous affections. Of course children inherit the tendency to these and similar conditions, and many a puny, emaciated nervous little one is so because its mother was a tea-drunkard, and its whole system has been narcotized from the time its being began.”

In England the opposition against tea has never taken an organized form, but a good deal has been said and written on the question. In 1863 or 1864 an Anti-Teapot Society was formed, but not against tea-drinking. It published a quarterly magazine called the *Anti-Teapot Review*. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* stated that it

was no enthusiastic wish to convert teatopers into anything else that called this body into existence; it was rather a desire to oppose and to cast scorn on the narrowness of mind that seems to be encouraged in circles which, by no very violent figure of speech, may be described around a teapot. In other words, he says, the A. T. S. was a combination against modern Pharisaism, and he quotes the following extract from No. 1 of the *Review*, May, 1864, as proving his point:—

“Many persons either do not, or pretend not to, know what teapotism is. In consequence of this ignorance or affectation we shall, in a few words, try to describe the leading features of the male and female teapot. Teapotism is a magnificent profession, but a very sorry practice! It professes a large-hearted liberality, unbounded piety, and the enunciation of true principles; but its practice is that of a narrow-minded clique, who condemn all who go not with them. Its piety consists in hero-worship and the circulation of illiterate tracts, calculated to attract the strong and to confound the weak; it is bounded on the north by the platform and meeting-house, and on the south by scandal, hassocks and tea, whence the name of teapots, &c.”

The article ends with the assurance that  
“The society will go on as it began: it

will remain strictly private, enforce the same rules, and show that it is the enemy, not of tea, but of teapots." The *Review* professed to be edited by members of the universities, and written only by members of the Anti-Teapot Society of Europe. The qualifications for membership were, to read the rules, to fill up the form of admission to be had in English, French, German, Dutch, and other languages; to be nominated and seconded by any two officers; "the latter (*sic*) wholesome rule was introduced so that inquisitive people might be prevented from joining the society out of sheer curiosity." The society appears to have made no converts, and had but a very short existence.

Tea-parties have always been popular institutions among Dissenting bodies, and it is therefore not surprising to find ministers taking part in meetings advocating a reduction of the tea duties. In 1848 the Rev. Dr. Hume, attending a meeting in Liverpool for this purpose, warmly defended tea, on the ground of health, and quoted with great satisfaction the evidence of Dr. Sigmond, given before the Committee of the House of

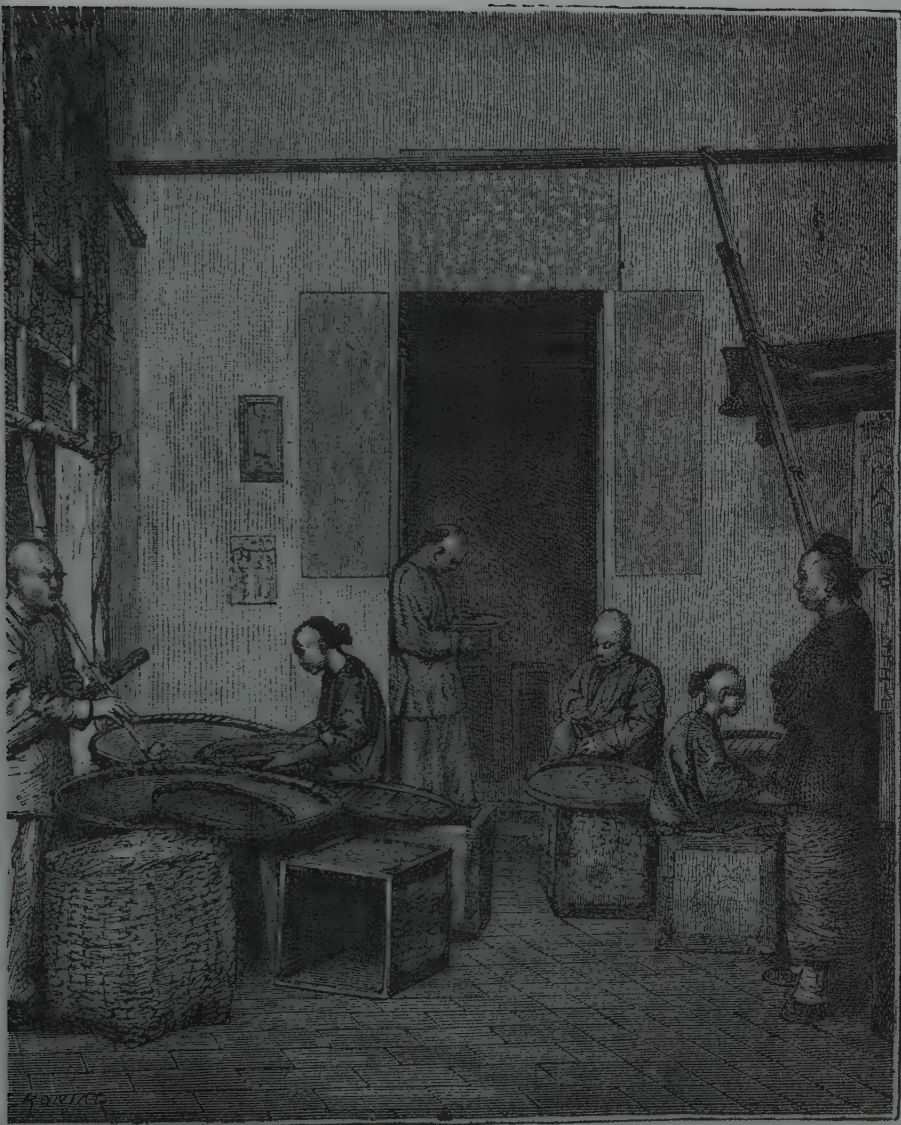
Commons. Asked what had been the result of the medical inquiries into the effect of tea upon the human frame, Doctor Sigmond replied, "I think it is of great importance in the prevention of skin disease, in comparison with any fluid we have been in the habit of drinking in former years, and also in removing glandular affections. I think scrofula has very much diminished in this country since tea has been so largely used. To those classes of society who are not of labouring habits, but who are of sedentary habits, and exercise the mind a good deal, tea is of great importance."

On the other hand, a famous physician of our time takes an entirely opposite view of the question. At the Sanitary Congress last year Dr. Richardson delivered an address on "Felicity as a Sanitary Research," and charged tea with being a promoter of infelicity. "As a rule," he says, "all agents which stimulate—that is to say, relax—the arterial tension, and so allow the blood a freer course through the organs, promote for a time felicity, but in the reaction leave depression. The alkaloid in tea, theine, has this



effect. It causes a short and slight felicity. It causes in a large number of persons a long and severe and even painful sadness. There are many who never knew a day of felicity, owing to this one destroying cause. In our poorer districts, amongst the poor women of our industrial populations, our spinning, our stocking-weaving women, the misery incident to their lot is often doubled by this one agent."

The Dean of Bangor is the latest clerical opponent of tea-drinking. Speaking at a meeting held to further the establishment of courses of instruction in practical cookery in the elementary schools, he said that if he had his own way there would be much less tea-drinking among people of all classes. Oatmeal and milk produced strong, hearty, good-tempered men and women; whereas excessive tea-drinking created a generation of nervous, discontented people, who were for ever complaining of the existing order of the universe, scolding their neighbours, and sighing after the impossible. Good cooking would, he firmly believed, enable them to take far higher and more correct views of



SIFTING TEA.



existence. In fact, he suspected that too much tea-drinking, by destroying the calmness of the nerves, was acting as a dangerous revolutionary force among us. Tea-drinking, renewed three or four times a day, made men and women feel weak, and the result was that the tea-kettle went before the gin-bottle, and the physical and nervous weakness, that had its origin in the bad cookery of an ignorant wife, ended in ruin, intemperance, and disease.

The worthy Dean's denunciation of tea-drinking formed the subject of numerous leading articles in the press, followed by letters from correspondents, several of whom referred to the difficulty of finding any satisfactory substitute for the fragrant and refreshing beverage which, during the present century; has come to be regarded almost as a necessary of life in English homes, both rich and poor. One gentleman pathetically describes his feelings on being presented one afternoon in a drawing-room, where he had been in the habit of being served with "at least three cups of supernatural tea," with "a glass brimful of a dim, opaque, greyish-

white liquid," which turned out to be cold barley-water.

Admitting that tea-drinking leads to indigestion, the *St. James's Gazette* points out that "tea-drinking is still, in itself, better than drunkenness; and there is always a chance that the first factor in the fatal series may not lead to the second, nor the second to the third. What numbers of persons of both sexes every one must know who drink tea three times a day—morning, afternoon, and evening—without ever getting drunk at all! Every one, again, must have met with cases in which men have brought themselves to utter grief through the abuse of spirituous liquors; but who ever heard of a man ruining himself or his family through excessive indulgence in tea? The confirmed tea-drinker never commits murder in his cups—never even goes home in a frantic condition to beat his wife. It is certain, on the other hand, that tea drunk in immoderate quantities does not good, but harm; and it is very desirable that, both in drinking and eating, people should on all occasions be temperate. It is difficult, however, to get



through existence without stimulants of some kind; and tea is probably as little injurious as any yet discovered. 'Life without stimulants,' as a modern philosopher has remarked, 'would be a dreary waste.'"

Reviewing the discussion, the *Lancet* doubted whether the abuse of tea-drinking is prevalent in the country, and maintained that hard-worked minds and fatigued bodies are the better for some gentle stimulant that rouses into activity the nerves, and which ministers to animal life and comfort. The editor concluded that the worthy dean's "conclusions are drawn from insufficient premises, which in their turn can scarcely be regarded as scientific truths."

The latest medical contribution to the literature of the question is a lecture on "Coffee and Tea," by Dr. Poore, Vice-Chairman of the Council of the Parkes Museum, given at the Parkes Museum on the 6th of December, 1883. He thus describes the good and bad effects of these luxuries:—

"The peculiar effects of tea and coffee are due to the alkaloid. These effects are of a *refreshing* character. The circulation of the blood is increased; the elimination of

CO<sub>2</sub> by the lungs is heightened. The reflex excitability of the nerve centres is roused, thereby increasing the impressionability of the consumer, and great wakefulness results; it also excites the peristalsis of the intestines. Tea and coffee, then, are stimulants; they rouse the tissues to increased action, make us insensible to fatigue, and enable us to do more work than we otherwise could. The differences between these stimulants and alcoholic stimulants are worth noticing. Tea and coffee keep us awake and attentive; and those who have taken either for the purposes of midnight study, will know how under their influence the receptive powers of the brain seem to be at its maximum. They cause no mental 'elevation,' and do not rouse the imaginative faculties as a glass of wine seems to do. They enable a man to work, and often rob him of sleep, and do not, like a glass of wine, tend to increase the power of sleep after the work has been accomplished. The tannic acid in tea is doubtless one of the causes why it is as a drink so attractive. It is slightly astringent, and clean in the mouth, and does not 'cloy the palate,' an expression for which I can find no scientific equivalent; tannic acid is also one of the dangers and drawbacks of tea. It is largely present in the common teas used by the poor. . . . Excessive tea-drinkers are more common than excessive coffee-drinkers, because the heavier coffee more easily produces satiety than the lighter tea; and it is not possible for ordinary stomachs to tolerate more than a certain amount of coffee, even when pure, and only a very small amount of the thick, sweet, adulterated stuff which too often passes for coffee in this country. . . . Tea is more of a pure beverage than coffee, has less dietetic value, and is less stimulating; it is more capable of being used as a pure luxury (it is indeed the tobacco of women),

but its great astringency is one reason which makes its excessive use highly undesirable."

The question of the action of tea, as well as of tobacco and other stimulants, has occupied the attention of Professor Mantegazza, an Italian physiologist of high repute. This eminent scholar places tea amongst the nervous foods; and his enthusiasm for it is unbounded. He credits it with the power of dispelling weariness and lessening the annoyances of life. He considers it the greatest friend to the man of letters, enabling him to work without fatigue; an aid to conversation, rendering it pleasant and easy. His own experience of tea is, that it revives drooping intellectual activity; and he regards it the best stimulus to exertion. "Without its aid," he says, "I should be idle." His general conclusions are that it is beneficial to adults, but injurious to children; and he pronounces it one of the greatest blessings of Providence.

Whatever may be urged in favour of tea, it is undeniable that excess is injurious, and that children would be better without it. It contains no strength, and therefore ought to

be forbidden to the young. In an inquiry into the sickly condition of the children in many of the cotton factories of Lancashire, Dr. Ferguson, of Bolton, found that children between thirteen and sixteen years of age, who had been brought up on tea or coffee, increased in weight only about four pounds a year, while those fed on milk increased at the rate of about fifteen pounds a year. For this evil the blame rests entirely upon the mothers, who exceed the bounds of moderation in the use of tea. Though doctors differ widely in their views of the 'action of tea, they all agree that few things are more certain to produce "flatulence in the over-worked female" than this beverage. Their views are shared by other authorities. Miss Barnett, speaking at the National Health Society's Exhibition last year, said, "I am constantly preaching against tea, as it is taken by the vast majority of the working women of England. They drink it at every meal, and suffer from indigestion before they come to middle age. They try to get the blackest fluid out of the tea, and in doing so draw out the tannin, which, though it has its

virtues, acts upon the coats of the stomach and produces indigestion by middle life."

But the argument that tea shortens the life of every man who drinks it is absurd. "It is said," remarked Wm. Howitt, "that Mithridates could live and flourish on poisons, and, if it is true that tea or coffee is a poison, so do most of us. Wm. Hutton, the shrewd and humorous author of the histories of Birmingham and Derby, and also of a life of himself, scarcely inferior to that of Franklin in lessons of life-wisdom, said that he had been told that coffee was a slow poison, and he added that he had found it very slow, for he had drunk it more than sixty years without any ill effect. My experience of tea, as well as coffee," added Howitt, "has been the same." Howitt's experience is the experience of tens of thousands of people. The moral in this, as in other matters, is that people must judge for themselves whether tea is injurious or beneficial. As Dr. Poore candidly admits, "a properly controlled appetite, or instinct, is as safe a guide in the matters of diet as a physiologist or a moralist."



## CHAPTER VIII.

## TEA AS A SOURCE OF REVENUE.

Tea heavily taxed—How it was adulterated in the “Good Old Times”—Efforts to secure a reduction in the duty—Why crime and ignorance prevail—Mr. Disraeli’s proposal to reduce the duty on tea, opposed by Mr. Gladstone—Mr. Gladstone’s legislation—The Chancellor of the Exchequer memorialized to reduce the duty on Indian tea—The annual expenditure on tea—Professor Leoni Levi’s estimate of its consumption by the working classes.

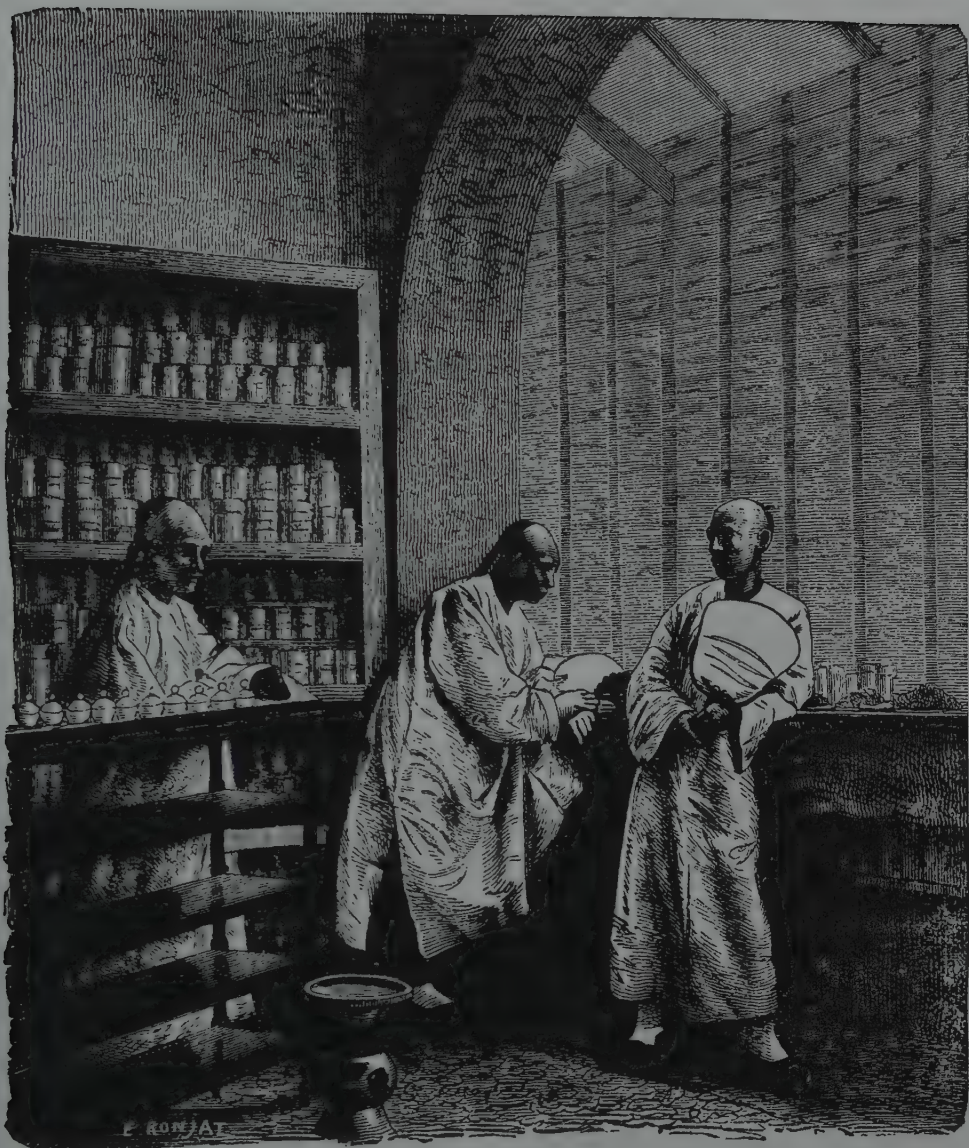
TEA had not been in use many years before the government discovered in it a valuable means of replenishing the national exchequer. Accordingly they passed a law, in 1660, imposing a duty of eightpence per gallon on all tea made and sold in coffee-houses, which were visited twice daily by officers. It would occupy too much space to describe subsequent legislation, but the subject appears at

times to have been almost as perplexing as the liquor traffic to the various governments.

The tea duties have, however, always been excessively heavy, and it is therefore not surprising that a great deal of smuggling was carried on in the "Good Old Times," and that deceptions were practised to a very large extent by unscrupulous tea-dealers. Parliament at last interfered. In the reign of George II. an Act of Parliament recites that "several ill-disposed persons do frequently fabricate, dye, or manufacture very great quantities of sloe-leaves, liquorice-leaves, and the leaves of tea that have before been used, or the leaves of other trees, shrubs, or plants, in imitation of tea, and do likewise mix, colour, stain and dye such leaves with terra japonica, sugar, molasses, clay, logwood and with other ingredients, and do sell and vend the same as real tea, to the prejudice of the health of his Majesty's subjects, the diminution of his revenue, and to the ruin of the fair trader." The Act then declares, "that the dealer in and seller of such sophisticated teas shall forfeit the

sum of ten pounds for every pound-weight.” In a report of the Committee of the House of Commons, in 1783, it is stated that “the quantity of fictitious tea annually manufactured from sloe, liquorice, and ash-tree leaves, in different parts of England, to be mixed with genuine teas, is computed at four millions of pounds, and that at a time when the whole quantity of genuine tea sold by the East India Company did not exceed more than six millions of pounds annually.” The Act does not seem, however, to have done much to check the evil, for in the year 1828 the existence of several tea manufactories was disclosed, the penalties for defrauding the revenue amounting in one case to 840*l*. It is impossible to estimate the amount of smuggled tea consumed, but the official accounts indicate a large consumption.

It appears that from 1710 to 1810 not fewer than 750,219,016 lbs. of tea were sold at the East India Company's sales, the value of which was 129,804,595*l*. The duty alone amounted to 104,856,858*l*. In 1828 the revenue amounted to 3,302,252*l*. The ex-



TEA-TASTING IN CHINA.





clusive right of trading in tea, so long enjoyed by the East India Company, terminated on the 22nd of April, 1834, when an alteration was made in the method of collecting the dues. Under the old system a tax was levied on the value of the tea; but under the new it was levied upon the weight and quality, the duties ranging from 1*s.* 6*d.* on Bohea, and 3*s.* on Pekoe and other kinds.<sup>1</sup>

The transfer did not, however, secure the approval of the tea-dealers, who continued to petition Parliament for a reduction of the duty. A society was formed at Liverpool with this object in view, and in 1846 its officers published a letter addressed to Sir Robert Peel, contending that, as tea was an

<sup>1</sup> *Hyson* means before rain, or flourishing spring; therefore it is often called "young Hyson." "Hyson Skin" is composed of the refuse of other kinds, the native term being "tea-skins." Refuse of still coarser descriptions is called "tea-bones." *Bohea* is the name of the hills in the region where it is gathered. *Pekoe*, or *Poco*, means "white hair," or the down of tender leaves; *Powchong*, "folded plant;" *Souchong*, "small plant." *Twankay* is the name of a river in the region where it is bought. *Congo*, from a term signifying "labour," for the care required in its preparation.—"*Notes and Queries*," *Third Series*, vi. p. 264.

object of the first importance to the labouring classes, "the duty on it should be such in amount and principle as to induce the greatest consumption." The memorialists argued :—

"That the duties have been imposed without any reference to the encouragement of its consumption ; that the quantity required by the public for their wants and comforts has never entered into the consideration of the legislature ; that all they have looked to has been to get a certain amount of revenue from tea, treating it, important as it is to the people's sustenance and well-being, as a subject unworthy of consideration, *per se*, and for their benefit ; that it has been taxed from time to time, heavier and heavier, as its consumption increased ; so that, looking at the changes which have taken place in these duties, it would appear as if their object had been to check, if not altogether destroy, the use of tea amongst us, as though it were a poisonous or noxious thing, a species of opium, which, on moral and political grounds, ought to be prohibited. The memorialists found, by a return to an order of the House of Commons, dated the 11th of February, 1845, that in 1784 the tax was  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; in 1795 it was raised to 20 per cent.; in 1797 to 20 per cent. under 2s. 6d. per lb., and 30 per cent. at and above that price ; in 1798 to 20 and 35 per cent. respectively ; in 1800 to 20 and 40 per cent. ; in 1801 to 20 and 50 per cent. ; in 1803 to 65 and 95 per cent.; in 1806 to 96 per cent. on all prices ; and in 1819 to 96 per cent. under 2s. per lb., and 100 per cent. at and above that price, continuing to the termination of the company's

charter. In 1834, the trade being thrown open, the duty was attempted to be levied according to a scale which was supposed to mark quality, being 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb. on the lowest tea, 2*s.* 2*d.* per lb. on the middle, and 3*s.* per lb. on the finest kinds. This scale was also constructed on the principle of taxing as near as may be the article with an average duty of 100 per cent., but was abandoned in 1836, and succeeded by a uniform duty of 2*s.* 1*d.* per lb. until 1840, when the additional 5 per cent. imposed on all Customs duties brought it up to 2*s.* 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* per lb."

In the following year, 1846, a towns' meeting was held at Liverpool for the purpose of "taking into consideration the measures which should be adopted to procure as speedily as possible a material reduction of the present duty on tea." A resolution was passed declaring the duty of 2*s.* 2*d.* exorbitant, impolitic, and oppressive. In supporting a resolution that a reduction of duty would remove inducements to intemperance and thereby diminish crime, an employer of labour felt assured that if the legislature would cheapen tea, coffee, sugar, and soap, it would give the means of prolonging lives instead of shortening them, and keep a man at his own fireside instead of his going to the tavern, with the ten thousand evils in its train. The speaker, how-

ever, caused considerable amusement when he expressed the opinion that if the Irish population could get tea at a cheap rate, they would, to a considerable extent, abandon whisky. Put a cup of tea and a glass of whisky side by side, we venture to say that ninety-nine out of every hundred Irishmen would prefer 'the whisky. "An Irishman," says Dr. Pope, "was requested by a lady to do some work for her, which he performed to her complete satisfaction. 'Pat,' she said, 'I'll treat you.' 'Heaven bless your honour, ma'am,' says Pat. 'What would you prefer? A pint of porter or a tumbler of grog?' 'Well, ma'am,' says Pat, 'I don't wish to be troublesome, but I'll take the one awhilest you're making the other.' " This is, we fear, a type of the average Irishman, whose love of whisky is the greatest blot upon his character.

Notwithstanding the great outcries against the Government duty, the consumption of tea steadily increased, and in 1844 the duty alone amounted to 4,524,193*l*. There were, it must be admitted, some inequalities in the system of taxation. The question attracted

the notice of Mr. Leitch Ritchie (then editor of *Chambers's Journal*), who suggested that the moral reform and social improvement for which the present age is remarkable have had their basis in—tea. But if Great Britain is so large a consumer of tea, why, he asks, “do crime and ignorance still prevail amongst the body of the people? Because,” he answers, “the poorer classes still drink bad tea, imitation tea, or no tea at all. The tea that is now in bond at tenpence pays a duty of two shillings and a penny, while the tea that is sold in bond at several shillings pays no more. Thus the poor are charged at least three times more, according to value, than the rich.” An illustration of this anomaly was given by a speaker at a second meeting held at Liverpool in 1848, for the purpose of securing a reduction in the duties. “Tea,” says the speaker, “must be considered in a two-fold light, not merely as an article of luxury to some, but as an article of necessity to all classes of her Majesty’s subjects. But do all classes procure this necessity on equal terms? No; for though it is in general use with the peer as well as



the peasant, we yet find the same duties levied on teas of the lowest as on teas of the highest description."

It was urged by those who defended the policy of the Government that tea was a stimulant, and that therefore it was injurious. "We admit the fact," said the Rev. Dr. Hume, "but we strenuously deny the inference. A stimulant is not necessarily injurious, though the more violent always are. Heat is a stimulant, and so is water in particular circumstances; food is a stimulant; the light of heaven is a stimulant, whether in animal or in vegetable nature, and so is the beaming countenance and kindling heart of a sympathetic friend."

Neither meetings nor memorials, however, seemed to have any influence with the Government; but in 1852 Mr. Disraeli proposed to reduce the duty on tea to 1s. 10d., and ultimately to 1s., the reduction to be spread over six years. This reduction, with other reductions of the dues on shipping and the malt tax, would have involved a loss of more than 3,000,000*l.*, to supply which, he proposed, among other things, to impose the

income tax on industrial incomes over 100*l*. His proposals were, however, strongly opposed by Mr. Gladstone, and rejected by a large majority. When, however, Mr. Gladstone returned to power, in 1853, he proposed the very same reductions which he had when out of office rejected. He proposed to reduce the duty to 1*s*. 10*d*. during the following year, and by 3*d*. a year until the limit of 1*s*. was reached. Including reduction of other taxes, the loss to the revenue would have amounted to 5,315,000*l*., which he proposed to meet by renewing the income tax for seven years, extending the stamp duties, and increasing the duty on spirits ; but owing to the Crimean War the proposed reduction was not effected. The expenses of this war were so heavy, amounting to 70,000,000*l*., that the duty on tea was increased 3*d*. a pound.

When the war was over, Mr. Gladstone desired that the added duties on tea, sugar, and other necessities of life, should be taken off ; but on the 6th of March, 1857, "the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir George Lewis, announced a modification of

the Budget resolutions so far as the tea duties were concerned, and proposed that the amount of the tax, which he had arranged for three years, should be applicable for one year only. Mr. Gladstone moved an amendment to the effect that after April 5, 1857, the duty should be 1s. 3*d.*, and after the 5th of April, 1858, 1s. The amendment was negatived by 187 to 125, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer's resolution, fixing the duty at 1s. 5*d.* was carried." In 1865 the duty was reduced to 6*d.* under Mr. Gladstone's Government, and at this figure it remains. But the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has recently been called to the disadvantage under which the Indian tea-industry is placed by the imposition of the English Customs duty of 6*d.* per lb. on all tea imports, and the object of the memorialists was to induce him to consider the expediency of abolishing or modifying this duty when framing his financial budget. It was pointed out that the Indian tea-industry is greatly in want of such relief, as evidenced by recent Calcutta reports showing the market value of the shares of the joint-stock tea companies.

Out of a total of 116 companies forty-six only gave any dividend on the crop of 1882, and of these forty-six only twenty paid over five per cent. Of the seventy which gave no dividend not a few have paid nothing for several years, and many are struggling on under the incubus of borrowed capital, with the hope of improvement in the markets, the cause of this depression being directly traceable to the heavy fall in prices during the last few years. The opinion was expressed that if the trade could be relieved of the present heavy tax of from 50 to 100 per cent. on the value, it might be fairly assumed that a reduction of, say, 4*d.* per lb. to the consumer would lead to a large increase in the consumption, and leave a return of the remaining 2*d.* per lb. more to the producer, which would in many cases prove a working profit to gardens now being carried on at a loss.

Reference was also made to the argument, of which doubtless the Chancellor of the Exchequer is aware, that inasmuch as the average value of Indian teas is higher than that of China teas, the present duty

weighs more heavily on the latter, and consequently that its abolition would deprive the Indian importer of a certain amount of protection; but at the same time the opinion was expressed that a general reduction of prices to the consumer all round would induce on the part of the public a more general preference for the superior quality of the Indian produce, and that the increased demand for it thereby engendered would more than counterbalance any loss of protection which might be sustained.

As will be seen from the following table of the duties, the consumers of tea contribute very largely to the revenue of the country:—

	£.
1874 . . . . .	3,248,446
1875 . . . . .	3,568,634
1876 . . . . .	3,706,831
1877 . . . . .	3,723,147
1878 . . . . .	4,002,211
1879 . . . . .	4,162,221
1880 . . . . .	3,698,338
1881 . . . . .	3,865,720
1882 . . . . .	3,974,481
1883 . . . . .	4,230,341
	<hr/>
	38,180,376

The annual expenditure on tea amounts to



about 11,000,000*l.* Large as this amount appears, it sinks into insignificance when compared with the expenditure upon intoxicating drinks. During the last year it amounted to no less than 125,477,275*l.* There are few who would regret to see this formidable amount reduced to a fourth of its present dimensions ; and no one surely will deny that if everybody drank tea, instead of alcoholic drinks, a great reform in the habits of the people would take place. Drunkenness, and its attendant evil, pauperism, would cease ; plenty would take the place of poverty, joy for sadness, health for sickness ; and happiness would reign throughout the land.

Reference has already been made to the fact that England stands next to China as the greatest tea-drinking nation ; and it appears that the working classes consume the largest proportion of tea imported. Professor Leoni Levi compiled in 1873 an elaborate estimate of the amount of taxation falling on the working classes of the United Kingdom ; and in his report he shows that from consumption of tea alone they contributed 2,200,000*l.* to the revenue, as against

900,000*l.* by the middle and upper classes. At the present time, however, the working classes contribute over 3,000,000*l.* as their proportion of the duty upon tea. A clearer light is thrown upon their contributions to the national exchequer by the following table showing the proportion for every pound of taxes paid from each item :—

As falling on the Working Classes.			As falling on the Middle and Upper Classes.		
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Spirits . . . . .	7	5	Local taxes, land, houses, &c. . . . .	7	0
Malt . . . . .	3	0	Stamps . . . . .	3	3
Tobacco . . . . .	3	0	Income-tax . . . . .	3	0
Local taxes and houses .	2	9	Spirits . . . . .	1	10
Tea . . . . .	1	5	Malt . . . . .	0	9
Sugar . . . . .	1	0	Tobacco . . . . .	0	9
Licences . . . . .	0	9	Sugar and tea . . . . .	1	0
Other taxes . . . . .	0	8	Land and houses . . . . .	0	10
			Wine . . . . .	0	7
			Other taxes . . . . .	1	0
Total . . . . .	£1	0 0	Total . . . . .	£1	0 0

The Professor classes tea as a necessary, but confesses that it is difficult to define whether certain articles in daily use are necessities or luxuries. Many articles, he points out, such as white bread, tea, sugar, which not long ago were considered luxuries, are now, with the improved condition of the

people, regarded as absolute necessities. He refers, in particular, to the effect of indirect taxes in greatly enhancing the cost of the taxed article to the consumer. "The whole-sale import price of tea, for example, may be 1s. a pound, and upon this there is 6*d.* duty. But immediately as it passes from the importer to the dealer, and from the dealer to the retailer, the whole price, duty paid, is charged first with ten, and then with thirty per cent. to meet expenses and profits of trade, whereby the retail price is increased probably from 2*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* per lb. This trading, therefore, constitutes so much extra tax, and it is a tax which the working classes pay to the middle and higher classes, through whose hands such articles pass." Whether we shall ever have a free breakfast-table, it is impossible to say; but if the tax on tea were abolished, it is obvious that it would be necessary to impose some other tax, probably even more objectionable.

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